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Beginning

The Girl With the Golden Heels—By Kenyon Gambier



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All Nash passenger cars have cord tires as standard equipment

- 5-passenger touring
- 2-passenger roadster
- 4-passenger sport model
- 7-passenger touring
- 4-passenger coupé
- 7-passenger sedan

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- 5-passenger touring
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- 3-passenger coupé
- 5-passenger sedan



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Number 2

The Girl With the Golden Heels

By KENYON GAMBIER

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY RALEIGH

IF BY any chance it should not be raining in Plymouth, England, a stranger with nothing to do but wait for a schooner is sure to be sleepy; so on the soft, moist morning of a South Devon summer I sat on a bench on the Hoe and lazily looked out over the dancing wavelets. No white spot gleaming over the green water or shimmering against the sharp-cut horizon looked like the sail of the Odette. I asked myself again why my partner had wished me to run down here from London and await this little lady of the seas.

That trifling matter of the jettisoning of the deck load of pit props on the previous voyage from Sables d'Olonne could easily have been adjusted by an exchange of telegrams with Captain Saltier. Did LeCroix really want to present me with an excuse for a little vacation? So he had said, but my partner was a great, jolly, red-haired Gascon, prodigal of words, of gestures, of money, of everything; and reticence or concealment or innocent deceit rested on his shoulders as would a pink ribbon on the neck of a hippopotamus. I had left London with an amused, vague impression that LeCroix for some reason wanted me away, and I was glad that he did, for a week's loafing was a welcome novelty.

I looked over the western headlands toward Falmouth, where the Odette had learned her first bitter lesson. What a pother she had kicked up when she had ceased to be a rich man's plaything and been forced to earn her living! That had happened weeks before I knew her, but I knew her story. Laden with pottery clay, she had sailed for Boston from South Devon straight into rough seas, had choked her pumps with the clay—and with indignation, I liked to fancy—and had been forced into Queenstown, where our destroyers were then foraging. Cargo unloaded, pumps cleared, cargo reloaded, she had gone out into a southwesterly gale which had driven her up the Bristol Channel, with pumps again useless and seven feet of water in her. At Barry Docks the Queenstown performance had been repeated, and she had cleared when the President's cabled proclamation prohibited the war zone to all American sailing craft. The Jennie Lee, as she was then called, was doomed to rot and rust away in a lost corner of docks crowded with grimy, hustling coal transports. How I had saved her—but my idle thoughts rambled from the Odette to Odette.

Odette was a French girl of many contradictions; too naïve to be haughty, too handsome to be winsome; the perfect one—chic, demure, charged to the end of her long,



She Twisted About, and in a Second Projected a Foot Inside the Golden-Heeled Slipper

fine hair with youth, elasticity, electricity and all kinds of esprit; too good to be vain, too beautiful to be good, too good to be true. This was my summary of what LeCroix and his charming, powdered wife had said of Odette at different times. It was rather confused and vague, but it was the best I could do until I saw her. In the meantime she was a mascot to whom I owed much, and LeCroix more.

I chuckled as I thought of Odette. I had had lots of fun about her over there in St.-Nazaire, and I had craved fun at that time, too, and snatched every chance to make it. How surprised she would be if she could know how intimately and incessantly she had been described and re-described by people who had not seen her since she was five years old. LeCroix, her guardian, and madame, his good wife, had promised each other and me that she should visit London if it could be managed. I had always the vague hope that I should some day look into the radiant eyes of this daughter of Provence.

My lazy thought drifted to the past. I closed my eyes and pretended that I heard the beat of Drake's drum and the click of his biased bowl as it hit the jack. I dreamed of his climbing a tree in Darien and gazing south, the first Englishman to see the Pacific Ocean; of his planting a cross on the coast of what was to be California; of the association thus established by Plymouth with ocean shores which in the future were to send tribute of furs to an Astor and so found a family which should represent it in Parliament. I dreamed of the Mayflower, heading west, burying a blunt nose in Atlantic rollers, a solid craft, befitting her passengers, without flare to her bows, rake to her masts or grace in her lines; solemn-minded and dutifully answering her helm with a stolid deliberation; dependable, broad-beamed matron, contrasting sharply with the Odette, a saucy aristocrat of the seas reduced by war to work, carrying cargo with blithe buoyancy.

And then I suppose I went off sound, for I afterward had a jumbled recollection of boarding the Mayflower, hove to off the Lizard, fighting Drake hand to hand with a cutlass and leaping over high bulwarks into the Odette with unconscious Odette doubled over my shoulder. I was about to lay the inanimate form of the innocent girl on what would have been the quarter-deck if the schooner had possessed one, but she recovered with a jump and shrieked so wildly that I woke. A page boy just old enough to possess a cracking voice was screeching falsetto into my ear and tapping me on the shoulder. He had three close-set rows of buttons down his front, and I remember wondering where he had got so many, for the button aftermath of war was notoriously a short crop. He handed me a telegram. "Just arrived at the hotel, sir. Thought as you'd like it prompt."

I read the message and fiercely demanded the next train for London. The boy cocked his eye at the clouds, studied the waters, scanned the horizon.

"I'm not going by sea," I said sharply.

"Beg your pardon, sir," he said politely, "but I was raised to the fishing, and I can't think of nothing if I ain't looking round. You could catch the ten-thirty if you was quick."

"Run!" I ordered. "Tell them to make out my bill and you pack my suitcase!"

The boy glanced at the heavens.

"You won't have to tack," I said sharply. "The wind's dead astern of you."



Odette Had Evidently Dragged It Off Her Shoulders, Stepped Out of It, and Kicked Off Her Slippers Anyhow

He grinned and was off. When I reached the hotel my suitcase was in a taxi and Buttons stood by, bill in hand.

"Pay me in the taxi," he said, and waved me in. He sat by my side while I counted out money and complimented him on his efficiency. "The head porter's took bad," he explained, "so we gets things done." At the station he glanced inside. "We've saved the tide," he said.

In the train I reread my telegram:

Odette incommunicada chez LeCroix. BEARWAL.

Odette hidden away in LeCroix's house—why? Myself beguiled to the other end of England—why? Bearwal in London—why? How had Jim Shaw—Bearwal was Jim's New York cable address—come to know LeCroix? How had Jim ever heard of Odette? How did he know of my interest in Odette? Why should he telegraph to me about her? I scribbled on a blank sheet, addressing it on chance to Jim's London club:

Take monsieur and madame auto Seven Oaks dinner to-night. Meet me Paddington four-forty-five.

I wrapped this telegram round a half crown, flung it out as we ran through a small station and saw it picked up by a porter. It was incredible that it should arrive in time; improbable that Jim would be in his club; uncertain that he knew the LeCroix's well enough to get them out of the way for the evening; and most unlikely that all would be free of engagements. On the other hand Jim's cable address described the man. Bearwal—the bear and walrus—came from a Californian device signifying unconquerable energy. The bear floated on a lonely ocean, sitting on top of a dead walrus.

"If he sits still he starves," Jim would say contemptuously. "If he eats the walrus he drowns. Failures read it that way." He would snort here. "He nibbles carefully," he would add, "and in the end he floats ashore in a skin canoe, thirsty but safe."

That was Jim Shaw, a New York shipping man, alert as any compass needle and more dependable, for he had neither variation nor deviation, and always pointed true north.

So I left my message at that and pondered over this lustrous pearl of pulchritude and why she was hidden from me. Such perfidy on the part of Isidore LeCroix and madame, his amiable, rouged wife, must be punished; such cunning must be circumvented; such duplicity must be overmatched. It was outraged dignity, not the impossible perfections of Odette, which dragged me back to London. This exuberant prodigal Gascon, to whom somebody in St.-Nazaire had aptly applied somebody's description of Henry of Navarre—"a rich red grape, ripe to bursting"—must not be allowed to succeed in hiding this paragon of French girlhood from his deeply injured partner.

I had first heard of Odette the summer before as I had sat on a shaded seat on the Boulevard de l'Ocean at St.-Nazaire. I had been in a mood to love her or any other woman—young, old, ugly—for outside in the mouth of the Loire I could see the smokestack of the Swedish steamship Lowisa, laden with the steel rails for which I had been impatiently waiting and the St.-Mihel sector clamoring. A vehement, red-haired man on the next seat to mine had talked in words of flame to his companion of Odette. His Gascon

imagination, warm as tropical sunset, had been unhampered by fact; for I gathered that he had not seen this girl since her childhood. He was her guardian, his companion her mother's notary and lawyer, and this accidental meeting could only last an hour. So these two elderly men had let their tongues run loose, careless that I must hear. When the notary and the guardian had parted at last with a sounding smack on the cheek of the former from the lips of the latter I had liked the exuberant kisser none the less, and I had adored Odette.

"Who is this man?" I had asked of a passing acquaintance.

"Monsieur LeCroix, a coal dealer without coal, a shipowner without ships, but a rich man with money."

I had gone laughing to La Nouvelle Entrée. The Lowisa's funnel was now in line with les phares and she would soon dock. I should board her in the entrance lock.

I had arrived there just as her nose had pushed through the opened lock gate, and I had seen with surprise that her name was Louisa and her flag American; but I had not thought of a mistake at Brest until I had climbed to the bridge and shaken hands with the lieutenant commander in charge of her. It had dawned on us at the same moment that the Lowisa had been misssent south with unwanted rails; that the Louisa had come here with unneeded coal. My language—but the flow had been checked by sight of a man tripping over a rope on the dock side and falling headlong between hull and wall. I had flung over a fat fender and—well, it had partly saved him. The bundle I had gone in after and tumbled into a boat was still breathing.

That afternoon when I was bathing off the Rochers du Lion there had swum toward me a small but active, violently red-headed whale, whom I had impulsively addressed.

"Monsieur," I said, "the steamer which came to-day has coal which may be sold. If you approach monsieur le colonel American, the embarkation officer, perhaps he would sell to you, if you can get a permit from authorities."

LeCroix had rolled over and was floating, his two large feet projecting upward like a toy schooner with sails spread

bat-winged, and he had looked at me sidewise with traditional Gascon suspicion in his oblique glance.

"I should indeed hug the coal to my heart," he had said; "but why does monsieur extend this great favor to me, a stranger?"

"I wish," I had politely responded, "that Mademoiselle Odette should be warm."

LeCroix had swept one great hand upward beneath the surface, and so was treading water. Towering above me with a high dignity, he had demanded an explanation in the thunderous bellow of an Alaska seal. I had feared instant drowning and had quickly apologized and explained. He had said, standing very straight in the water, that mademoiselle was the daughter of a beloved friend of his boyhood, now dead, and of Madame Seravin, of noble character and lofty mien, living in the Midi. He blamed himself for having so freely mentioned the name of a young lady in so public a place, and tactfully rebuked me for listening. He had ended, as we walked together up the *plage*, by asking me to dinner. The next day he had come running and had tried to embrace me. He had got the whole cargo. That night I was presented to his charming wife, whose dinner was delicious. With her own hands she had prepared for me a *tarte aux framboises*. She looked on me as a worker of miracles, and her still bright eyes watched me as though they expected each moment some wonderful conjuring trick. Coal! I had got her husband coal! Ships? The government had taken over all his little coasting fleet of steamers! If only I waved my wand and brought a fleet to his dock she would do me a *tourte grasse*.

"Impossible!" I had interrupted. "Where in wartime would you get veal, mushrooms, sweetbreads, madame?"

"From the same place you would get the ships," she had answered, laughing.

And then I had told her husband what I had incidentally learned from the commander of the *Louisa*. The Jenny Lee, an American schooner, lay useless in Barry Dock. Two weeks later LeCroix had dragged me to the dock side and pointed to a schooner flying the French flag.

"The Odette," he had cried—"once the Jenny Lee."

I was able to tell him of two more bottled-up schooners, and these also he had bought. I dined nearly every day at his house now, and had been adopted by madame as a son. I was the LeCroix mascot; Odette was mine. We had talked of her every day, and the LeCroix's had strained their united fancies to endow her with every perfection.

Odette and the *tourte grasse* were promised to me after the war. Well, I had had the luscious pie in London. And now Odette was there, and I was denied. I was still thinking it over when I saw Jim Shaw on the Paddington platform, the same old wire-haired, lean-faced bunch of electric wires as ever.

"He talks like a merry megaphone and laughs like a happy lobo wolf," said Jim as we got into his hired car. "Where did you find him?"

"A war capture," I answered—"at St.-Nazaire. I did him some good turns. After I was demobilized I bought five schooners in a bunch at Boston and offered him a charter by cablegram. He answered, offering partnership. We're making money." Jim grinned.

"I should say you ought," he answered. "I had to bait the Seven Oaks hook with a twenty-one-hundred-ton steamer before he bit. I hope Odette is worth it."

"I hope she is, Jim."

"Hope?"

"I've never seen her." I told him the tale of Odette. "Why am I barred?" I asked.

"You are young and handsome," Jim said, laughing.

"She is all heart. She is marked down for another. You and she must never, never meet."

"Guess again."

"She's cross-eyed. She can't make good."

"That's more likely. How did you get onto her?"

"I looked you up at your office and met LeCroix. He said he had heard of me—welcomed me as your friend and took me home with him. I saw a skirt streaking it upstairs and heard him say in what he thought was a whisper, 'A friend of Roke—he must not see Odette.'"

"And you telegraphed on that?" I asked, laughing.

"Sure! I was right or you wouldn't be here. How long do you want?"

"Keep 'em till ten o'clock."

"The hour's noted," said Jim. "LeCroix's waiting at the office for me now."

"I had better not go too near. Somebody might see me and tell him."

Jim pulled up. "Good luck," he said, and was off.

II

MY PLAN became more ambitious as I dressed for dinner. If I could lure Odette into LeCroix's automobile I should add such *éclat* to my triumph as to imperil

a partnership. I should make LeCroix ridiculous; he would forgive me much, but not that. If I could find the chauffeur the automobile was mine. To get past Jacques was another matter. Jacques was an incorruptible old family servant of LeCroix's, who had the heart of a kindly pessimist and the wrinkled face of a humorist nipped by adversity. When emotion hit his soul his eyes appeared to jump out at you and retreat, and then you were uncertain that it had happened, just as you are when a lizard puts his tongue in his cheek after capturing a fly; the tongue has been projected, but Jacques produced an optical illusion by an unconscious facial contraction most interesting to watch. Jacques would probably know that I was not to meet mademoiselle, but he was easily flustered, very deferential to his master's partner, and he liked me; so I hoped to get by him without doing personal violence to the good old man.

An hour later I turned into the mews which had once been stables and now held the garage of LeCroix. To my secret joy I found Henri, inhaling as usual from a dreadful black French cigarette.

"Henri," I said in French, "Monsieur LeCroix desires that you come to the house at half past eight and take Mademoiselle Seravin and myself to Madame Barthier."

Henri was a Paris Apache who had been partly redeemed from crime by life in the trenches. He fixed his gimlet eyes on me, exhaled streams of smoke from pinched nostrils and said in his atrocious accent, "But Monsieur Jacques said quarter past eight."

I hid my surprise and shot in the dark.

"That," I answered, "will suit Mademoiselle Seravin and myself quite as well. Monsieur LeCroix said half past."

Henri's lashless lid fluttered in a hint at a wink and he showed yellow teeth between bloodless lips in what he meant for a grin.

"I understand, monsieur," he said. "I'll be dark as Montmartre in wartime."

"Not so dark as that, Henri," I said with dignity. "There is no reason why you should not mention it to monsieur."

"As monsieur pleases," Henri said with that wicked shrug of his kind, "but it is not the will of mademoiselle."

"Oh," I answered with pretended indifference, "if mademoiselle prefers."

(Continued on Page 66)



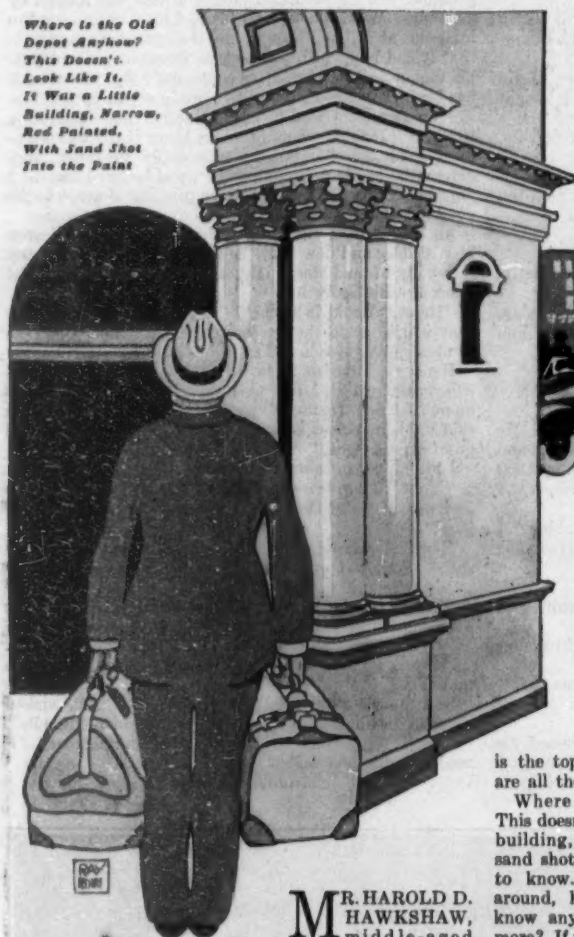
"Alas"—Madame Seravin Tapped Her Forehead With Her Forefinger—"We Can Only Have Pity for Her. She is Ill. She is Delirious. Her Strange Actions are Thus Explained!"

GOING BACK HOME

By Emerson Hough

ILLUSTRATED BY RAY ROHN

Where is the Old Depot Anyhow? This Doesn't Look Like It. It Was a Little Building, Narrow, Red Painted, With Sand Shot Into the Paint



MR. HAROLD D. HAWKSHAW, middle-aged city man, so much like

the average city man that he might have been called thinly disguised as yourself, stepped from Number 4 in the twilight of an autumn day. The train was late at Prairie City. It had not changed its habits in thirty years.

"Thank God," reflected Mr. Hawkshaw, "in the city trains always depart and arrive at convenient hours." You always could start out for anywhere in the world after a day's work, and get your dinner on the train as you rolled out from the city; and from anywhere in the world you always could take a train which would land you in the city just after breakfast on the diner, in time for a day's work. But now this disgusting habit of Number 4 being late between cities had landed Mr. Hawkshaw—that is to say, yourself—at precisely such hour as left it surely too early to dine on the diner and perhaps too late to dine anywhere else. It was no wonder that Mr. Hawkshaw carried a heavy brown, as well as two heavy hand bags, as he stumbled over the switch rods at the place where the sleeping stop in Prairie City.

Not the Same Town at All

YOU naturally looked for the old village omnibus, first cousin to the Deadwood stage, when you stopped at Prairie City, did you not? You ought to know. You were born there, raised there, educated there. Before you made the platform where the old bus used to pull up you naturally looked around a bit in the dusk after descending from Number 4. Now, let's see—where was the old Hope Cemetery? It used to be out in the hazel brush just beyond the depot. Yes, maybe just over that way. It has been fifteen years since you last were here, thirty years since you left Prairie City for a field more suited to your powers. Now you have been asked to come out to your native town and lecture on office efficiency at the monthly meeting of the Rotary Club. You wish the entertainment committee would come and help you with your hand bags and your

Somehow this does not look like the old depot. That was just west of the Big Fill, where the road ran under the tracks on its way out into the country. Remember, when you were a little shaver, the first train that came in over the railroad to Prairie City? Before that the merchants

used to freight everything by wagon west of the Mississippi River.

Wonder where the public square is—which way? Ought to be able to see the courthouse from the depot. One thing's sure, the elevators of the Prairie City Grain and Lumber Company used to be right on the edge of the depot. The sign was white, all the way across the red elevator—"Prairie City Grain and Lumber Company." Why isn't it there now? Guess you ought to know the place, oughtn't you? What they mean, moving signs around, changing things? Where is the Big Fill? Where is the hazel brush? Where

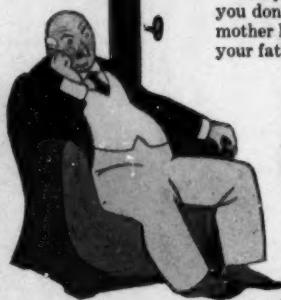
is the top of the courthouse? Where are all the signs?

Where is the old depot anyhow? This doesn't look like it. It was a little building, narrow, red painted, with sand shot into the paint. You ought to know. If they move everything around, how can they expect us to know anything about the place any more? If you'd known about this, probably you wouldn't have come out here to give any lecture to the Rotary Club.

Now which way is the cemetery? Wonder if anybody ever does anything about things in cemeteries here—keeps the grass cut, or anything. In the city everything is shipshape about the cemeteries. Guess we know how to run such things in the city, don't we? Ha-hum! Why does a fellow think of such things? And if they have moved the cemetery around, how can they expect a fellow to know where it is?

You reach the vitrified-brick pavement as you emerge from the dark wilderness of the yards and the switch rods. All at once it seems to stretch out a hundred yards or so in front of you. There is a double row of white street lights disclosing a wide thoroughfare which does not in the least look like the little road of black mud you used to know. This street also is paved with vitrified brick. Before you stands a large vitrified-brick structure, handsomely illuminated, which must be the Prairie City railway station. Two or three hundred people are getting on or off Number 4. Wheels are rumbling, there are shouting and confusion going on here under the blaze of light.

You do not see the old bus now waiting at the edge of the depot platform. There is a long row of taxicabs, and across the street are many private cars, of which a goodly number are the real thing. Why, this isn't the old depot at all! The porter has put you off at the wrong town! But no, there is the name on the opulent station building—Prairie City. This is where you were born, all right, and raised. This is where you came from, preposition and all, thirty years ago; and this is where you are to lecture to the Rotary Club on efficiency and success—that sort of thing.



You are the Loneliest, Graysiest, Saddest Man in All Prairie City. They Have Changed Your Town

A red-faced, smiling young man approaches you and asks if you are Mr. Hawkshaw. As he reaches for your bags he tells you that he is Mr. G. Harry Byllesby, president of the Rotary Club, who wrote to you asking you to come out to speak at the old home town. First he assures you that Prairie City is the best town between Omaha and Chicago, then he leads you not to the old bus and not to a taxicab but to his own car, which you readily enough know cost eight thousand dollars at least. He introduces you to the other members of the reception committee.

"But where is the old depot?" you demand. "I used to know how things looked around here. Now, the old Prairie City Grain and Lumber Company used to be just across the yards—that way."

The committee of the Rotary Club laugh as one man.

Echoes From a Distant Past

"OH, NO, it wasn't," says the president. "I guess you haven't been here for quite a while, Mr. Hawkshaw. Why, the old depot is back that way about three-quarters of a mile! Some of the old elevator buildings are down there yet, but the new station has brought the business all over here, of course. Eight or ten years—changed all around."

"But the Big Fill —" you begin.

"What?"

"Why, you know, where the road ran under the track! Out toward the old Hope Cemetery."

The president of the Rotary Club shakes his head. So you don't know, really and exactly where your father and mother lie buried. They came out here in 1850, you know, your father and mother. All wild prairie here then—not a tree. But now the streets are heavily shaded, and under the long vista of flashing street lights there are checkered shadows on the vitrified-brick pavement. As the car whirls out you continue raving that the hazel brush used to run right up to the depot yards. You insist to the committee that there used to be little frame

houses near here, where poor people lived, washerwomen and odd-job men. They laugh good-naturedly. That was before their time.

It takes longer now to get uptown from the new depot, even in a car and not on the old bus, but at length the lights of Longacre flare up ahead. When you complain that it takes longer to get up to the public square than it

used to, G. Harry explains succinctly, "There is more town than there used to be." You see buildings which you do not recognize. The paved streets are flanked by houses which you never saw here before. You are all turned around. You turn the Rotary Club all around, too, talking of a town that nobody ever saw, unless it was yourself.

Certainly you never saw this hotel before, because it is not on the public square, and because it is brick, with elevators, hot and cold water, bath in almost every room. The Saturday-night plumbing of the old washtub lugged into the hot kitchen seems to have left Prairie City somehow, along with the old depot and the short and muddy road which led up from the depot to the public square. In the old days the hotel was a frame house. You can remember when the first telephone came to Prairie City, how



funny it sounded, way off down by the depot, a little voice heard way off somewhere—made you sort of shivery inside to listen to it. Of course there were few electric lights anywhere in the world then. The hotel had lamps, little ones, and the flame always ran up in a peak along one side of the chimney and kept it smoked black.

The committee lands you in the lobby and you shake hands with a lot of well-dressed people. A bell hop takes your bags and shows you up to your room and fixes the window and asks you if you want ice water and takes a quarter, just as natural. You go downstairs and at the desk the hotel clerk seems to have a familiar look, although he is gray like yourself. He looks at you curiously and holds out his hand, smiling.

"So you've come back home, Hal," says the hotel clerk to you.

Then he tells you why his face seems familiar. He is Emmet Watson, who used to drive the delivery wagon for the store. You went fishing for minnows together hundreds of times in the slough back of the schoolhouse. He is now the owner of the hotel. He stuck around late to-day so that he might shake hands with his old boyhood fishing companion.

The committee takes you into the great dining room of the hotel, where they have arranged a little banquet for you—long tables, a great many business men who look the real thing. You shake hands with more men. Somehow the names seem familiar—Blackman, Sellers, Jones, Sudley, Williamson, Brown, Hanford, Anderson, Myers, Ramsey, Ford. It seems as though you must have heard those names before. But these men are not yet old. Can they be sons of the old citizens? Are you the oldest man at the table?

The waitresses wear caps. There is a printed menu, and it is clean. There are real chops, real coffee, real bread and butter; so by the traveler's test everything else also is good. Probably G. Harry Bylesby signed a stiff ticket. In the old times the farmer who got a meal at the hotel—if he had sold his wheat or flaxseed well—put down thirty-five cents on the counter with Mrs. Vines; and Mrs. Vines did all the cooking and all the waiting on the table. Guess you ought to know how the old dining room looked. Red-damask tablecloth; red-damask napkins folded in the glasses; tall celery glass in the middle, alongside a glass bowl filled with little round crackers—oyster crackers they used to call them—and, bad form or not, you crumbled them in your stew at the church sociables.

Alone in the Pocket Metropolis

BUT the young men at the Rotary Club entertain no more than a polite interest in these historical details. They ask you what the feeling is in the city regarding disarmament and the farm-organization movement and the situation in rails. There are copies of your favorite city journal in the room. Your hosts exhibit a wholly sophisticated attitude toward life in general and toward yourself. No one comes up and says, "You ought to know who I am." G. Harry tactfully reminds you that his father was G. W. Bylesby, of Watson's Grove—where you used to shoot wild pigeons when you were a boy. G. Harry is a graduate of Princeton. He is getting a son ready to enter Yale. They all believe in branching out—that's the Prairie City way, you know.

The town has twenty-seven thousand inhabitants. When you left it had thirty-five hundred. It has the same number of churches, but each now has a fine new building. Even the smallest church cost seventy thousand dollars. As to the Presbyterian and the U. P. and the Congregationalist and the Methodist and the Baptist church buildings—the committee forgets just what each of those did



New Puts Things Down the Well to Keep Them Cool

But when they have gone away in their cars to their own homes, and you are left alone in the hotel lobby, except for the traveling men, whom you do not know, you begin to feel that in some way someone has put something over on you. You put on your overcoat and walk along the side street to the public square all by yourself. Guess you know where everything is on the public square, don't you? The post office was over there—or was it the other corner?

The public square is paved and brilliantly lighted. In the center there is a great graystone building which you never saw before. The old red-brick courthouse is gone. The sunburned grass plot is gone. There are cannon at the corners of the grounds, and statues. Why, this is not the public square at all—it is a civic center! You are lost—lost in your own town, where you were born and raised.

On a side street there is a large building with globe lights in front, and a total stranger tells you that there is the new post office, looking over his shoulder guardedly in case you might pull a gun. You find four motion-picture theaters, good ones, offering wares wholly metropolitan. There are numerous drug stores, well appointed, well filled. There never was a saloon in Prairie City. Sort of ran to churches, she did.

But without consulting you they have changed things all around. Injured, you begin to explore the town all by yourself, at night. You turn down a side street, finding it paved and curbed and lighted. Streets used to be just black dirt—sometimes a few boards for a sidewalk here or there. People wore boots or overshoes. In the spring, time the frost was going out, the black mud would cake the wagon wheels from hub to rim. Every once in a while a wagon would get stuck fast in the street.

What fine church buildings! And just look at the splendid trees—even the elms are big these days. As to the maples, they are giants now. You can remember when

cost. They were put up before the war, when building was cheaper.

They are going to take you over town in the morning, for you don't speak until 2:30 in the afternoon—in the new high-school building. They let you off to-night with just a little speech, and you voice a conventional thankfulness for the kindness of your reception. They say that they will let you sleep because you are tired. "See you again tomorrow." "Honey you will feel at home in the old town." "Good night then to you." You shake hands with fifty men whose faces somehow seem strangely familiar.

they were just little trees, time you were a boy here. Every tree here was planted by an early citizen.

Even in the moonlight, alone on this side street, you get a strange new feeling which is disconcerting to you, a sort of atmosphere—what are you going to call it? It is an atmosphere of home. These houses around you are homes. Back in the city you live in a flat. Of course a flat is much better. Everything so convenient. But here the light which shows at the edges of the drawn shades seems somehow different. And here are houses with tall pillars, many with colonial entrances. There are many modern bungalows, fussy as the next. What has happened here without the asking of your consent to have it happen? This isn't the old town, nor yet is it the city. And yet there is an atmosphere of home. You feel it, all by yourself, in the moonlight, a wanderer and a stranger in the town where you were raised. When you go back to your hotel you are the loneliest, grayest, saddest man in all Prairie City. They have changed your town.

Old Landmarks Swept Away

BUT of course you know what will happen to-morrow. You have a friend who lectures on the Chautauqua circuit. He tells you that in every town out in the provinces the reception committee takes him out and shows him the new high iron bridge. You suppose the committee will take you out on some similar errand, although you know there is no new high iron bridge possible near Prairie City. The Big Fill was about the only declivity of consequence. You think you will dodge the committee and go out by yourself. You want to think over your speech a little bit more. Somehow this is not going to be just the sort of audience you thought it ought to be.

The next day you inquire for the new high-school building and walk out that way. To your surprise you find a structure larger than any building at the state university when you were in college there. Remember how your father and mother sent you to college? Frontier money was hard-made money, but the pioneers moved West to educate their children, to give them a start. And across the street is the junior high school, itself half a block in size and strictly modern. The new high-school building stands right

over the spot where once was the first high-school building of Prairie City. Why, it's gone now! And that was the finest school building in the central part of the state, wasn't it? Made of cream-colored pressed brick imported from Chicago, wasn't it? Wasn't your own father one of the school trustees? Don't you remember how the county issued bonds for that school building of cream-colored brick? The county didn't have cash money enough in those days when

Prairie City was a town of only two thousand or so, times when you were a boy. Didn't your father, who was a deacon and wore red whiskers under his chin,

speak for the bond issue in the courthouse meeting? Didn't he say: "We pledged our past to build our new homes here and educate our children. Why not pledge a part of our

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"I Bought the First Fencing for My Farm From Your Father Long Before Bobbed Wire Was Come"

THE ARCHDUKE'S TAPESTRY

By PHYLLIS BOTTOME

ILLUSTRATED BY NANCY FAY

HE WAS an immaculate young man, and he could not get over it. Nature had given him six-foot-two of admirable shape and stature, and race had improved upon these advantages. Greek gods could have taught him nothing as to feature; but he might have enlightened them upon the mingled charm and insolence of a single eyeglass. His tailors had always been English, his horses Hungarian, and his wines French.

Nobody had ever had to teach him how to dance, ride or flirt. Fortunately his clothes were wearing excellently, his horses he had sold to profiteers, and his wines to a dry American speeding through Europe; but his habits remained in a world where there was no longer any scope for them. Everything had been swallowed up in the war, even his king and his uniforms.

Fate, which had always been his obedient servant—he had been able to control everything except the weather—was now his exacting master. He was face to face with the fact that two and two make four, and that if you have not got two and two you cannot have four. Franz Anton pacing up and down a vast set of empty gilded rooms in an old Viennese palace, sunless and fireless, was astonished at the strictness of arithmetic.

It would have been easier for Franz Anton if he had had neither courage nor humor. His humor stuck in his throat whenever he was presented with the unscrupulous bargains by which some of his less sensitive friends profited in the hour of misfortune, and his courage prevented him from taking that swift straight course into the Danube which some of his other—more sensitive—friends found the simplest remedy for their disasters.

The Danube still played its part in the life of the Viennese—it was no longer the blue Danube of their laughing dreams, to which they had so often and so exquisitely waltzed, when their world moved to music and to pleasure, but a heavy, dirty, freezing flood, which nevertheless rested upon some of them more lightly than their troubles.

Franz Anton thought of this Danube, but there was his mother to be considered, and people who have mothers are under an obligation to life. Besides, Franz Anton couldn't quite contemplate ultimate defeat. He belonged to that small band of good losers who bide their time, keep their nerve and come up again at the turn of the tide.

He wouldn't take the Danube, blue or yellow, but he might have to take Anna Schneider. Anna Schneider was the equivalent of fifty million kronen. Her father was an energetic blackguard, with a massive chin and an honest sense for highway robbery, who had made a fortune out of smuggling butter. Before the war Anna might have been a restaurant waitress—never in Vienna, for she had not the wit or the chic for so lively a city—but at some country inn where she would have been called "Liebling" by all Franz Anton's friends, chucked under the chin and, in the case of less discriminate admirers, have been granted even wider favors. But, alas! not by Franz Anton. The chin would have been his extreme limit. It was his fate to be fastidious about women, to dislike fat red arms attached to hands solely created to put large portions into ample mouths.

He resented the human voice raised above a certain pitch, continuous giggling had a depressing effect upon his spirits, and anything flatfooted in the way of a woman's favor robbed him of a pastime.

Franz Anton was not a vain man, but he had a pride as hot as fire, and the thought of Anna Schneider as his wife brought the blood into his clear olive cheeks as if it had been forced there by a blow.



"Oh, the Whole Situation is So Cruel!" the Girl Mured. "It is Like—for You, I Mean—Getting Out of a Hedge of Thorns"

He walked slowly to the end of the three great rooms, where by the lingering light of a winter sunset he could see the last of his treasures. The archduke's tapestry stretched across twenty feet of wall; the green of the sea was in it, and the blue of clear spring skies. The figures that moved across its flawless surface were all beautiful and young. They were, as Franz Anton had been all his easy youth, responsible for nothing except their graceful pleasures. Maria Theresa had ordered this tapestry from Bruges for the marriage of one of her daughters, and it had come down to Franz Anton by direct succession.

He stood before the tapestry with his hands in his pockets, and something not unlike tears sprang to his dark-brown eyes. A slight sound at the farther end of the room made him turn with exaggerated buoyancy to face the intruder. It was his mother. She came slowly forward, and he noticed with a fresh pang that her hands were blue with cold. An hour ago they had had their midday meal. It had consisted of thin soup, black bread and cooked turnips. In the long run this type of meal is not sustaining.

Franz Anton drew forward a faded gilded chair. His mother sat down without speaking. She looked at the

tapestry and then back at her son. After a moment's pause he said: "I am considering the future, dear mother, and I find it a cold entertainment for the afternoon. It is a little selfish of me to ask you to share it."

His mother's steady blue eyes rested on his face.

"I have much to be thankful for," she said; "I have you."

The archduchess was a woman of great force of character; she had ruled palaces admirably, and men without disaster, but she did not rule her son. She studied him and submitted to the results of her study.

"I was about to suggest," Franz Anton said, looking down at his slim, polished boots, "a new object for gratitude; a very new one, dear mother. You remember our little friend, Fräulein Schneider, to whom, with her mother, you were so good as to give tea last week? Should you not, quite frankly, at our present pass, consider her as an alternative to disaster? I assure you I should prefer her to the sight of the bead necklaces you make to sell to foreigners."

"I do not see why you should object to a useful occupation," said his mother gravely. "I knitted all your socks when you were a little boy. What you suggest may be as necessary as my present task, but do not let us disguise from ourselves that it will be very much more terrible than that."

"I rather like her father," said Anton with a wry smile. "He told me the other day that all men lived by dirty tricks, and that the only difference between himself and others was that he always brought his tricks off. It seemed to me time that I should imitate his example."

His mother put her hand over her eyes.

"These questions have not arisen before," she said unsteadily, "in our family. I am afraid I am not modern. Anton, you remember how they sat on their chairs? Frau Schneider and her daughter? They were not even timid. I prefer people of low extraction timid. They behaved as if they had a right to be here."

"My dear mother," laughed Franz Anton, "they had the best of rights. They could buy the roof over our heads, including its contents; there is no greater feeling of security."

"Before the war," said his mother, "I should not have engaged that

girl as a servant—not at any rate as a house servant. I might have thought her suitable to milk cows or head geese."

"And now you must think of her," said Anton gently, "as one who can provide us with milk and even bring geese to cover our bare board."

"It is for me you are making this sacrifice," said the archduchess bitterly. "Do you suppose I don't know you would rather die than marry her, if I had had the good fortune to follow your father, who never saw any of these atrocious things, into the grave?"

"We must take the world as we find it," said Anton. "For me it has this one good thing in it—that you are still alive. Perhaps even in the other world they are incommoded by the new-rich."

"Do not be blasphemous, Anton," said his mother softly. "Let us keep our religion and our manners. They are all that is left to us."

"It is true I have not seen any desire on Fräulein Anna's part to acquire them," murmured Franz Anton. "You agree, then, that I must marry her?"

His mother said nothing. Their eyes met across the tapestry, questioning each other.

"I had thought," Anton said at last, hesitatingly, "that there might be an opportunity. I know some English people

here, they are always rich. But you would prefer perhaps that we should not try to part with it?"

The archduchess grasped the arm of her chair. She was afraid to express herself. She and her son knew each other so well that their meanings refused to cloak themselves in speech or to withhold themselves in silence. She spoke at last with great firmness.

"I should be glad, indeed, if you succeeded in selling it. Even to the English. Can we not ask your acquaintances to tea—let us say, on Sunday—when we will not be at home to anyone else?"

Anton bent very low and kissed her hand.

"You are the best of mothers," he said. "I must confess I would rather fall to my enemy than to my inferior."

The last rays of the sun had gone. The dancing figures of the tapestry withdrew into the dusk. But the mother and son remained there together, silent and absorbed, as if the young and graceful figures of the past were dancing still.

II

THE enemies came on Sunday. They were not bad types of English people. Mrs. Boltby Butler was tall, angular and well dressed. She had a wide, kind mouth and eyes that had never had to look at anything too hard. Perhaps it would have been better if she had been less anxious to overlook the disability of her hosts in not being English. She had traveled a great deal and had never found foreigners hard to understand. Mr. Boltby Butler looked like a preternaturally acute old baby, his head was bald, his eyebrows gray and bushy. He was both innocent and shrewd. No one could have taken him in about money, and almost anyone could take him in about anything else.

They had brought with them, without asking leave, a fox terrier and a young American girl who was a member of an Anglo-American relief society. Unfortunately, the archduchess looked upon dogs as objects slightly removed from wolves, suitably employed in hunting wild boars; and she disliked philanthropists.

Miss Draper was dressed in black and kept in the background. Still, she was there—a young unmarried person thrust upon the archduchess without warning. The Boltby Butlers said they hoped the archduchess didn't mind dogs.

Topsy couldn't be left alone in a strange place, it put her off her food; but they did not make even this adequate excuse for Miss Draper.

"I think," said the archduchess slowly and distinctly, "that I have never met an American before."

Miss Draper had nothing to answer to this impressive statement beyond a tentative and charming smile. Franz Anton was very much struck with her smile. It lit her eyes and then passed, a humorous and delightful gleam, over the rest of her face. Miss Draper had a very short upper lip, a neat little nose and a great quantity of corn-colored hair which shone as if it had fire in it. Her eyebrows and eyelashes were dark and particularly well marked. The archduchess noticed them, and thought them out of place.

Baronin Bidart—for the archduchess' name was proscribed and her real rank unknown to her visitors—had prepared a magnificent tea for her son's guests. There were slices of white bread and butter, *pâté de foie gras*, and cakes which she

had made herself, by selling one of her few remaining jewels to pay for the materials. Mrs. Boltby Butler said she was astonished at the splendid food they found in Vienna, and at the extraordinary cheapness of the things in the shops. Fortunately she made these statements in a fluent but to the baronin perfectly unintelligible German.

Mr. Boltby Butler talked English, and as the baronin had been brought up by an English governess she understood him very well.

"You know," he explained to her kindly, "that we never consider the Austrians in the same light as the Germans? On the contrary, we like them very much. Pushed into the war from behind, as it were; that is our way of looking at it—pushed from behind."

"You flatter us at the expense of our friends," the baronin interrupted him icily.

"Oh, dear baronin, not friends!" fluted Mrs. Boltby Butler, relaxing from her mastery of the foreign tongue and dropping comfortably into her own. "I am sure you never thought of the Germans as friends even in those sad, sad days when your purposes were so unfortunately linked."

"I am Austrian by marriage but German by birth," said the baronin dryly, then she repeated her maiden name. It was one that even in the most aristocratic Viennese circles struck awe; but these barbarians remained incredibly unmoved. "So the Germans are, of course," finished the baronin more dryly still, "not only my friends but my relations."

Franz Anton's eyes during this conversation met and found sympathy in those of Miss Cicely Draper. It struck Franz Anton that she did not look like a person who had devoted herself solely to philanthropy. Her clothes were simple, but they were admirably cut, and it was a relief to him to see that she had an ankle easily spanned by a couple of fingers. *Fräulein Schneider's* ankles looked like the trunks of solid trees; you guessed before you came to them the vast expansion of her feet.

Franz Anton found himself saying, apropos of nothing, "Have you ever been able to understand why women with thick ankles should choose to wear white stockings?"

Miss Cicely Draper looked a trifle puzzled at the irrelevance of this problem. Nobody in the room wore white stockings, even if it had been conceivable that Franz Anton should descend to personal remarks, and yet there was a certain heartfelt flavor about his question which spoke of personality. Miss Draper retained the impression that there was somebody in Franz Anton's mind who wore white stockings and who had better not.

Then Franz Anton left her to the society of Topsy, whom they had lured to the opposite side of the room, away from the tea table and the archduchess.

Mrs. Boltby Butler was not getting on very well with Franz Anton's mother. Questions of race had tacitly dropped, but questions equally unprepossessing dawned upon the horizon. The archduchess was not easy to talk to unless she knew who you were and could place all your relations. She disliked beating about doubtful social bushes, and never troubled herself about other women except when she was sure that they knew their business. The business of woman, in Baronin Bidart's mind, was to keep her house to perfection and manage her men to their advantage. In the first five minutes she learned that Mrs. Boltby Butler hadn't got a house and was managed by her husband.

Mr. Boltby Butler succeeded much better in entertaining his hostess. He took an intelligent interest in agriculture and was a capable amateur gardener. The baronin unbent to him over manure and became enthusiastic when they arrived at potting.

After tea was over, Franz Anton conducted his guests to see the tapestry. Mr. Boltby Butler looked at it as if he was being pleased in a perfectly disinterested manner by a very fine piece of work. He asked several intelligent questions as to date and materials.

"But surely, surely," Mrs. Boltby Butler remarked when they had reached a pause in their appreciation, "this is quite an heirloom. I wonder, baronin, that you should wish to part with it."

"You are indeed fortunate," replied the archduchess, "if you have never had to act in opposition to your wishes."

Cicely Draper turned away from the tapestry, and Anton followed her after he had very cleverly picked Mrs. Boltby Butler out of the broken pieces of her conversation.

"She isn't really stupid," Miss Draper said quickly; "she's, in her own way, awfully kind and clever, but how can she see what you will try to hide? You know you said that you had a piece of tapestry that you really had no occasion to keep. They told me so, both of them; you never let them guess how you—how your mother minded."

"Don't let it distress you," said Franz Anton kindly. "I am so sorry my mother didn't evade the little difficulty; it would have been better to evade it. Of course your friend is not in the least to blame. Why should she or anyone else suppose we are so foolish as to object to what would benefit us extremely?"

"Oh, the whole situation is so cruel!" the girl murmured. "Whichever way you turn you knock against something! It is like—for you, I mean—getting out of a hedge of thorns."

"Yes, only we don't get out," said Franz Anton, and then colored hotly at his inadvertent honesty.

He tried to be amusing after this indiscretion, but Miss Draper wouldn't let him be amusing. She came back to the tapestry.

"Look here," she said. "Must you really sell it? Baron Bidart, I am going to be rude—ruder even than my friend; I'm going to say just what I mean. Wouldn't you rather—work?"

Franz Anton looked at her steadily for a stiff moment, but something in her eyes, which was deeper than her indiscretion, softened his stiffness. He made a queer little gesture with his hands.

"I know English, French and Italian," he said.

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"This is Our Dance, I Think," She Asserted With Quivering Intensity

CHANGE

By OSCAR GRAEVE

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR D. FULLER

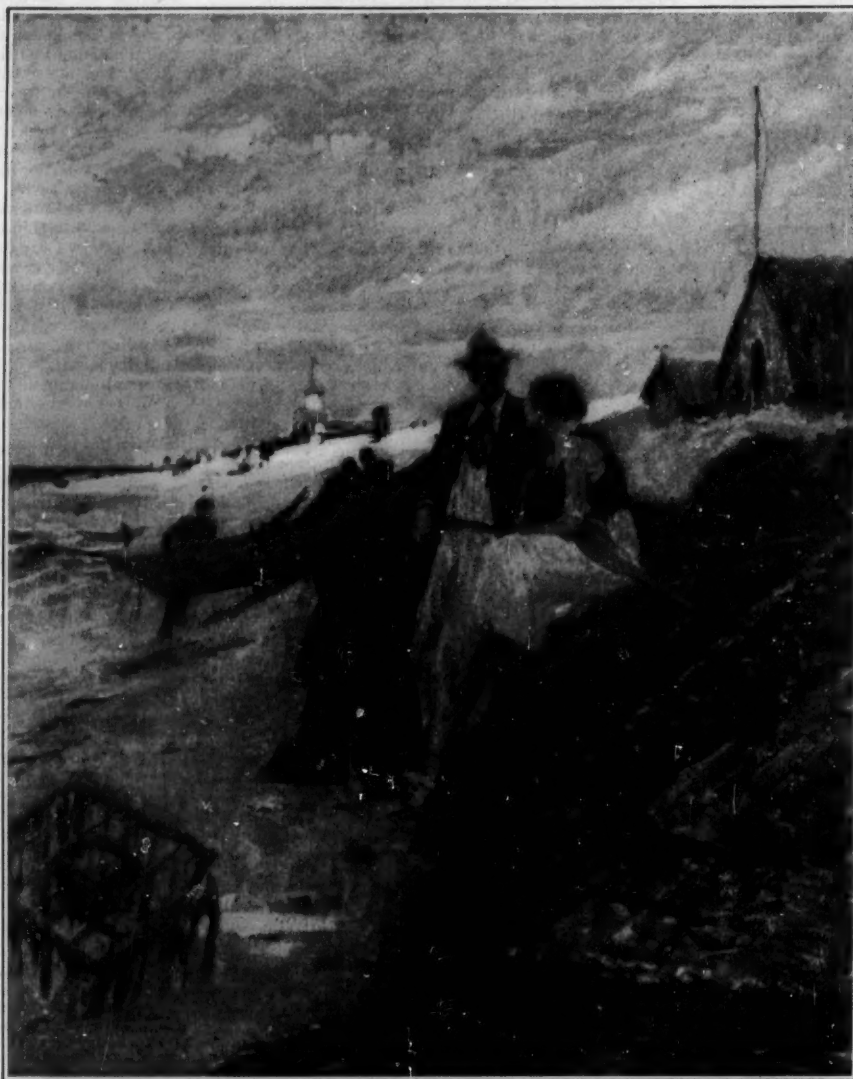
IT WAS the first time in twenty years that Andrew Kennedy had been in Edgewater. It was just twenty years ago—when he, too, was twenty—that he had said farewell to it and gone out into the world to make his fortune. And now, his fortune made and true to his vow, he had returned.

But as always in such cases disillusionment, like an autumnal mist, hung over the place. It was not the Edgewater he remembered. Of course, he could not but expect some changes, but he was not prepared for such an utter transformation. As he alighted from the train at the station, waving aside the importunate taxicab drivers, and walked down Central Avenue toward the sea he saw that the quaint and sleepy village of his youth, a mere scattering of wooden shops and houses, had been obliterated. There was now on either side of the street an interminable row of brightly glazed brick shops. The shops were surmounted by flats, and the street itself loud with the raucous horns of automobiles, and swift and glistening black with their movements. This, instead of the yellow dirt road over which during his father's last illness he had so often guided Mrs. Crandall's discarded saddle horse attached to the station wagon when he had been sent to meet some of the grand folk from the city who were Mrs. Crandall's guests. And he recalled now with a flicker of amusement and contempt how amazed these guests had been when with a shake of his head he had refused their tips. Of course, then, none of them could guess the outraged pride, the sullen determination that burned within him.

After all, it was easy enough to understand the growth and the metamorphosis of Edgewater. The electrification of the railroad, the Pennsylvania tunnel under the East River—these had done it. Edgewater, with its sea breezes and its white sands, had been brought in time a full hour nearer the city; and that, coupled with the natural overflow of New York's population, had been more than enough to change the face of the suburb with a flood of people eager in summer for cool air and cooler water, wherever they were to be found.

As he approached the sea the shops were left behind, but the old residences of a former day, he noticed, were now boarding houses. Some of them were still neat enough in appearance, with close-clipped lawns and privet hedges, but signs placed over doorways or affixed to posts proclaimed their status. The Villa Marie, the Ruby Cottage, the Edgewater Inn alternated with such announcements as "Meals" or "Lodgings by the Day, Week or Month." Still closer to the sea, in fact within sight of its tumbling sapphire waves, a change even more astonishing had swept the landscape. The stretch of marsh to the left of the Crandall estate had been filled in, and on this made land were hundreds—yes, literally hundreds—of tiny dwellings like enlarged shoe boxes set in distressingly regular array, row upon row of them. And a multitude of disheveled men and women and children in all stages of disarray ran to and from the beach or crowded the inadequate verandas, while drying bathing garments and ragged towels flapped from clotheslines, from railings and window sills, from every conceivable vantage point.

But Andrew Kennedy drew a great breath of relief as he saw that the Crandall place still maintained its integrity. Against that horde of newcomers it lifted its implacable pink stucco wall as of old. Through a gateway he caught a glimpse of its smooth rolling lawns and its clusters of trees and bushes and of the white towers of the Crandall house glittering in the sunlight. It was like a



Kennedy Was Happy—a Happiness Tinged Constantly With Sadness, for He Knew This Companionship Must Soon End

feudal castle set there, with the stucco wall, just higher than a tall man's head, guarding it from the turmoil at its gates. Toward the sea that stucco wall ran down to a stretch of marsh, still wild, with tall waving grass and pools of open water, which in itself formed a barrier against invasion.

How well Kennedy remembered that stucco wall! In his earliest childhood it had seemed to him to mark the boundaries of the world, and later, that illusion gone, it had still seemed to inclose all that was most desirable in the world. Perhaps for him it still had that effect; perhaps for him it still shut in everything in the world most worth having.

He moved beneath the purple shadow of the wall away from the main entrance with its high gates of wrought iron to where, at a distance of a full city block, was the humbler entrance where the stables stood, flanked on either side by vegetable gardens, and here, his arms crossed and resting upon the top of a wooden gate, he yielded himself to memories, bitter and bittersweet.

It was in these stables he had been born, or rather in the little cottage, its porch hung with vines, which was an integral part of the largest stable—born to servitude, born to serve his betters, at least those whom his father and his mother were but too ready to acknowledge his equals as well as theirs. But the ideas of caste which his parents had brought with them from over the sea, ideas whose yoke they had borne meekly all their lives—these ideas were not his ideas. It was America that had freed him from them. In the Edgewater Public School he had been taught that all men are created equal; and it was America that had given him his opportunity to prove that he was as good as

other men, and, yes, ironically enough, better than most in achieving the thing America most admired—piling up dollar upon dollar in an endless golden mound. It was for this accomplishment that the men he knew admired him; but perhaps this was because they knew nothing of other accomplishments, of the long night vigils, night after night, year after year, which he had spent with books—not only books which would be of use in his business but books in which he struggled to understand the thoughts and the efforts and the aspirations of many men for many ages. He wondered sometimes if he had not spent too much time with books, too little with men, except in the hard give-and-take of the realm of business.

His awakening to the fact that he was his own master had been a gradual one. At first—oh, of course, during all his childhood—he had been obedient enough and acquiescent enough to the state of mind habitual in the stables of the Crandall place. At first, too, he had played with the Crandall children, Natalie and Leonard, as if he were akin to them. He could remember now the great times they had had in the old rose garden beside the Crandall house and chasing around the circular fishpond, where at their approach the gold and silver fish had darted like jeweled shadows.

Behind the shelter of the rose bushes he had once kissed Natalie Crandall, and she, her dark eyes alight with mischief, had in turn kissed him.

His awakening had come later. It was when he was at the most sensitive age of seventeen and Natalie was sixteen—a slip of a girl who had sprung up suddenly into slim, arrogant maidenhood, willful, perverse and lovely.

Leonard Crandall, the brother, was a year older than Andrew, and had gone to the tennis matches at the Hunt Club—the club from which Andrew Kennedy was forever barred—leaving Natalie and himself alone. It was a hot summer's day. They had come up from the beach together, and now hung listlessly on the edge of the fishpond, too lazy to do anything but watch the gilded fish drift slowly about beneath the lily pads. Abruptly, moved by the warmth of the day, the perfume of the roses, the blue shimmering bowl of the summer sky, Andrew had taken Natalie's hand.

"Natalie, will you marry me when we are old enough?" he had asked.

He should have taken warning from the flash in her dark eyes as she had snatched her hand away.

"Don't be silly, Andrew!"

"But will you? If I go away and come back rich, with everything to offer you, will you marry me then?"

"No!"

"Why not?"

"You forget who you are, Andy. You forget that I am Natalie Crandall and you are our coachman's son. Mother said yesterday that it was time we stopped playing with you, and I suppose she was right. Now go away and don't come up here to the house again until I send for you."

She had drawn herself up like a young princess, with the preposterous arrogance of her spoiled and petted youth, and had pointed to the stables at the foot of the hill—the stables where he belonged. And he had gone, rebellious, a smoldering rage and hatred in his heart intermingled with a dreadful sort of pain and outraged emotion, and a sudden realization within him of barriers of whose existence he had never heretofore been aware. And he had never returned, not even when Natalie had sent for him, except later when his father's illness had forced him to assume some of his

father's duties. But that was two years later, and by that time Natalie Crandall, a radiant young lady of eighteen, beset by beaux and flushed with victories, was indeed as far removed from him as the fairy princess from the goatherd. Then his father's death had set Andrew free to go where he willed, and he had gone, vowing that some day he would return to make the Crandall place his own.

It had seemed an empty youthful vow, one soon to be forgotten, but it had stayed with Andrew Kennedy. It had held him true to his purpose. Men know little as yet of the obscure impulses that drive them on to their destiny; but Andrew knew that that scene by the fishpond on a soft and long ago summer day had done much to urge him relentlessly from one success to another. It had at the time hurt him so horribly and left such an indelible scar upon his soul. It had upset his world. At a critical age it had hardened him, forced him to a revision of his entire philosophy and comprehension of life. And it had seemed to him that the only way he could regain full possession of his pride was to install himself as master in the place from which he had once been so ignominiously dismissed.

For twenty years he had worked and studied with an intensity which few men show. That romantic desire had been to him what the achievement of fame or of a woman's love or of the pleasures of the world might be to others. He had denied himself everything until this one great objective was his; and in winning the means for it he had also won for himself wealth and the power that wealth means; but these he regarded as merely incidental. Yes, he had worked hard. At forty he was head of his own company—the Andrew Kennedy Company, well rated on the Stock Exchange and owning or in control of public utilities in half a hundred cities and towns.

His gaze as he leaned there on the gate became sharp once more. His eyes lost the haze of memories and became quick and critical. He was once more the man of business. He had heard, for he had made it a point to hear, something of the Crandalls—that the family was now land-poor; that they owned little except the property which he coveted; that it was Leonard Crandall, that gay broth of a boy with whom he had played in his youth, who had wasted the family fortunes. A racing stable, an unfortunate marriage, the gambling tables—he had run the gamut before his death five years ago. Natalie Crandall,

so Kennedy understood, was now the sole owner of the Crandall place; and Natalie, for all her arrogant loveliness, her clear white brow, her dark eyes and hair so dark and lustrous, had never married. So much he knew; and now he gazed through the gateway for signs of poverty. But the lawns were as smooth, the quiet house as remote and immaculate, the stables as freshly painted as ever he remembered them. It was true there were no sounds of horses in the stables. No doubt the horses had been replaced with motors, or at least a motor. Beyond a distant stretch of lawn a laborer was giving meticulous care to a garden already a blaze of proud autumnal bloom.

The thought came to Kennedy, viewing the perfect integrity of the estate, that he perhaps was the only invader who had knocked upon these gates with power sufficient to wrest the Crandall place from the Crandalls. He played with the thought for a moment, and then, shrugging his shoulders, turned away and retraced his steps along Central Avenue, away from the sea, past the far-flung colony of tiny dwellings set over the remade marshland, past the old residences converted into boarding houses and into the street of brick shops with glittering windows. At last he found the shop he sought. Upon a panel of polished wood was gilded the legend, Smith & Duggan, Real Estate.

II

WHILE Mr. Duggan, of the firm of Smith & Duggan, gazed reflectively at the card Andrew Kennedy had given him, Kennedy could see recognition of who he—Kennedy—was dawning perceptibly in Mr. Duggan's eyes. Yes, he knew who Andrew Kennedy of the Andrew Kennedy Company was, but he did not know who that same Andrew Kennedy had been. How was he to know of certain obscure impulses lying deep in a man's soul that had brought into being the Andrew Kennedy of to-day?

Therefore Mr. Duggan was puzzled by Kennedy's statement that he was interested in the Crandall property. His manner was both effusive and nervous as he said, "Well, now, I'll tell you, Mr. Kennedy—I don't know much about the Crandall estate. It's never been on the market so far as I can remember, and Edgewater isn't the sort of place it used to be. The swells don't come down here any more. Edgewater's seen its day so far as people in the social register are concerned. But we handle property all over this part of the island. You take places over in

Cedarhurst and Hewlett—you'll still find some mighty nice people over there. More your kind, I guess. Now there's a house with six acres in Cedarhurst near the Hunt Club —"

Kennedy cut him short with "No, I'm only interested in the Crandall property."

Mr. Duggan looked at him shrewdly, wrinkling his brows in an attempt to penetrate the meaning of this rich man's whim.

"Maybe you want to buy it for investment—cut it up into small parcels like the way they've done with those marshlands near the Crandalls. I'll tell you it pays, Mr. Kennedy. You'll hardly believe it, but they get five hundred a season for some of those little four-room shacks."

"No, if I can get the Crandall place I intend to keep it as it is."

"Well, I don't know. Edgewater isn't what it was. I can't understand why the Crandalls have hung on as long as they have."

"It's been their home for a great many years. Perhaps it's a matter of sentiment."

"Yeh, maybe—but Edgewater's so changed. All their friends, all their kind of people moved away years ago. In a way they're left stranded alone here. They'd never have anything to do with the village folks, y'know, who, like them, stay down all the year round. And I know they could have sold out ten years ago at a good figure, but now —"

Mr. Duggan shook his head disconsolately.

"But do you know the price asked—anything definite of that sort?" asked Kennedy impatiently.

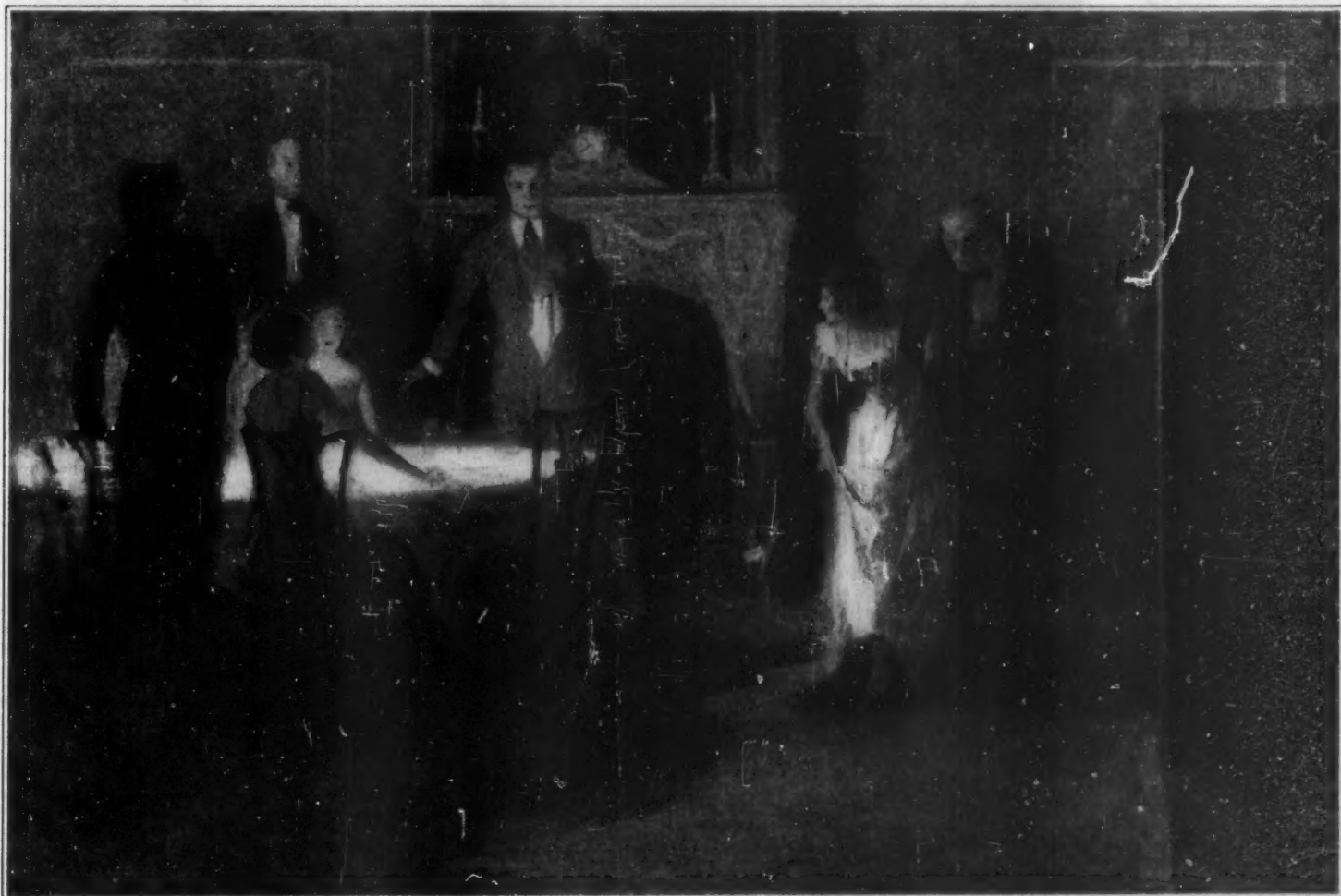
"No, I don't," admitted Mr. Duggan, a little surly at being driven to this admission. "There's some talk about the village that the Crandalls have lost most of their money. Maybe that would make 'em want to sell, but anyhow that's just gossip. There's no telling from the way the Crandalls act. They still keep their heads in the air and act like they think themselves a lot better than most anybody else, at least around this neck of the woods."

"When you say 'they,' whom do you mean? Isn't Miss Crandall the only Crandall left?"

"Well, there's her and her niece, Miss Sylvia Crandall."

"Oh, there's a niece! That must be Leonard's daughter," mused Kennedy.

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Here Before Him Was Personified the Struggle Between the Weakness of the Body and the Strength of the Spirit

GRAND OPERATICS

By EDWARD H. SMITH

A TRAVELER through Sir-Daria and Khokand, making his way painfully toward the east-lying Sungaria, stopped in amazement and lolled out of his saddle. There, not fifty yards away, advancing intrepidly up the mountain defile, was the knight Lohengrin. Doubt or confusion was impossible. There he was in his silver armor, with his chivalric helm on his head, his knightly robe flowing nobly in his wake and his broadsword clanking on his thigh. Not all the crowd of unwashed nomads babbling at the brave one's heels could unseat this illusion. There was he, summoned as once for Elsa in Brabant. The traveler expected at any moment to hear the upburst of the trumpets and see the swan come sailing down the gorge.

Nothing of the sort happened. Instead, Lohengrin posted himself on a stone a few paces from the intruder, drew his steel and gestured somewhat unintelligibly at his tatterdemalion entourage. In place of the tenor rapture of the *Leb' wohl, mein lieber Schwan*, there sprang from his throat a surge of guttural Mongolo-Tartar. Presently the oration ceased and a follower of Lohengrin advanced to demand what the stranger was doing here in the Tian-Shans, what he wanted, why he had come and, incidentally, why he should not be slain on the spot. The interpreter, coming up at the moment with the rest of the visitor's party, explained with many gestures and genuflections in the intimate quarter of Lohengrin that his master had come from the west and was on his way north and east. He was one of those mad Franks who call themselves explorers and have the vile habit of peering their noses into everybody's country, Allah's damnation upon them! But this Frank was traveling under the protection of the governor at Tashkend, whom Allah preserve! Hence it were better to let the fellow proceed in peace.

After some further *pourparlers*, Lohengrin and his crew departed, leaving a representative who invited the adventurer to visit their encampment and eat mutton and pony meat. The European advanced, and soon encountered a score of black tents clustered at the edge of a bit of upland pasture. This must be a tribe of the Kara-Kirghis, and Lohengrin must be the *monap*, or chief. But whence and why the costume?

Lohengrin of the Oxus

THAT night, sitting in the woolen tent at the fire of this Turkestan autocrat, a leader exercising powers of life and death over a few hundred human beings, the traveler questioned the *monap* and found that he, being prosperous, was in the habit of getting his regalia from peripatetic merchants coming from Tashkend. He had liked the costume and bought it—for three or four broad-tail sheep. Why? Did his Frankish guest admire the suit?

The explorer ventured the information that it must once have been the habiliment of a very great and much sung hero—a fellow who had the habit of appearing and disappearing like an afreet or jinni. By that rashness he was undone, for he was in the hands of a tribe of passionate tale-tellers. There was no escape from the obligation, so the wanderer sat cross-legged for hours, telling extravagant versions of European opera stories, which were duly translated into the local Tartar dialect and engulped by the Kirghis with deep gusto.

The next day he set forth upon his steppe and mountain voyage, wondering and marveling still at the presence of the panoply of the silver knight of the Schelde on the shoulders of a chief of the Oxus.



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Madame Matsenauer and Her Daughter

Here is a puzzle readily unriddled for him. Secondhand opera costumes, and some of those worn in the standard romantic rôles in the theater, are bought up by dealers in New York and other capitals, made into bales and shipped to far and strange ports, where they are sold to merchants who distribute them among the native dignitaries. Thus it happens that Lohengrin may step from the rocks of the Pamirs and the European stumble upon a puny prince in Nepal wielding Siegfried's Fafnir-alying brand. It is one of the humors, one of the bright absurdities of opera, and one has not to go so wide afield to find the others. The outstanding light that shines about opera for the eye of the outsider is wrought by the constant play of the lightnings of mischance, misadventure and often misfortune. The tragi-comedies in the stormy voyage of every opera troupe—high or humble—form the better part of the log. The pathos and fatality in the scores of all grand opera will be found also in the reality of operatic experience. But life touches the individual tragedies of men with mockery and coins laughter out of the dross of our lives. Perhaps something of this peculiarity is reflected in the fact that operatic life is never so comical or operatic people elsewhere so gay as when failure and commercial disaster are about to close down upon some venture in song. If you want to see an opera troupe in high good humor search out one that is about to strike the rocks. It is as though the strain and labor were at an end.

Milton Aborn, the veteran impresario who has guided the footsteps of many a troupe, tells of a company which found itself out in Ohio a number of years ago, floundering sadly and obviously due to meet shipwreck. Salaries had not been paid for weeks. The audiences were slim and contemptuous. Discipline was gone, but the singers went ahead with their work night after night, gayly, like men dancing on a slack wire over a chasm.

In one opera the basso plays the part of a weary mountain climber, and he is shown attaining a summit where an innkeeper comes out and gives a drink to the thirsting man. The innkeeper was played by a singer who was not only infected by the spirit raging through the company, but was jovially the enemy of the mountain-scaling bass. On this night he took the coconut shell used in the scene and smeared its interior liberally with Limburger cheese, a viand the bass particularly abhorred. When the traveler reached the mountain top the innkeeper handed him his drink in the cheese-plagued nutshell, struggling between chortles and his bits of the recitative. The basso took the drink and began his song, bringing it to his lips between phrases and pretending to quaff the grateful drink like the thirsting man he portrayed. There was a mighty display of nose wrinkling and loud sneezing, but the profundo mastered his olfactory emotions in manful style and finished his scene. In the wings it took five stage hands to save the innkeeper's life.

A Surprise for Rigoletto

ON THE following night the same troupe played Rigoletto. Readers will remember the scene in which the body is brought to Rigoletto inclosed in a sack. He has planned the murder of the duke and believes that his master's carcass is there in the sinister bag. In reality it is his beloved daughter, Gilda, who has been mortally stabbed. Presently the hunchback opens the bag, finds his dying darling and flies into his rage and mania. Gilda utters a dying plea for her ducal lover and betrayer, while Rigoletto sinks under his remorse. On this night the members of the stranding troupe decided that a bit of sport must be had with the Rigoletto, a serious-minded and rather pompous man.

The barytone suspected nothing whatever. He had been giving an excellent performance, considering the conditions, and was stepping into the last act with that fervor which singers feel when their voices are right, even though there be no pay forthcoming. The body was brought in. The bravo tried to throw it into the river. Rigoletto paid the killer's price and was left to exult over his victim. He began to open the bag for his last gloating. He was set for his outburst of shocked grief on finding the bleeding form of his Gilda, his cries of horror, his maledictions, his ravings.

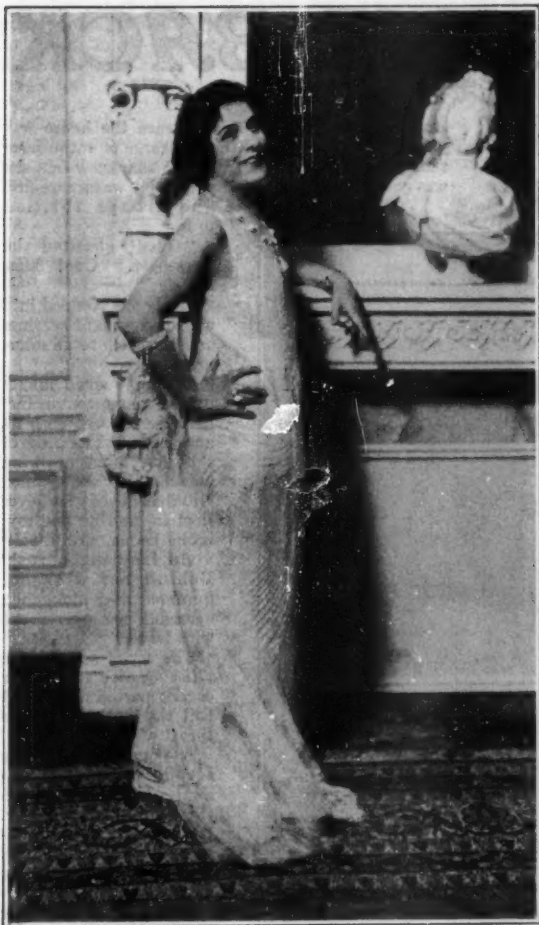
The rapt barytone drew open the grisly sack. A dark arm dropped out. A pair of bright, startled, white-ringed eyes stared into the face of the astounded singer. Instead of the white form of Gilda there was a very lively and very puzzled negro maid. The performance came to an abrupt end, to the guffaws of the audience and the madly delighted capers of the company behind the scenes.

But the humor of operatic life does not need to be pranked. Enough laughable situations come up of themselves in the ordinary progress of the season. Frequently the manager is put to the utmost fertility of invention to handle certain of these tangles.

When the Chicago Opera Company went on tour for the first time some performances were booked at Dallas, Texas, in a large auditorium at the fair grounds. It was found at the rehearsal that the building was full of a sparrow swarm nesting under the roof on the timbers. Every time the orchestra began to play, these hundreds of birds set up a piercing and distracting twittering and piping. The whole effect of the music was spoiled, and the impresario made certain that his performance would be greeted with laughter unless he could get rid of the sparrows. Here the house manager came to the rescue with a shotgun, which was



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Enrico Caruso and Scotti Listening to the Phonograph Record of One of Their Duets



Geraldine Farrar

fired into the air so that the frightened sparrows fled in disorder and remained outside during the performance.

But at the matinee the following day the sparrows were back—in augmented numbers, it seemed. Worse yet, the house manager had disappeared. The impresario hastened to the captain of police and asked him to fire his revolver into the air. The official not only refused but forbade any of his men to try the trick. There was no time to lose. In a few minutes the audience would be arriving, and the manager realized that once a crowd has its attention riveted on some absurdity no amount of artistic persuasion can hope to divert it. He rushed about in pursuit of large paper bags, and shortly returned with an armful. He and the ushers spent the next five minutes blowing the bags full of air and then exploding them between their hands. The sparrows left immediately and the performance went ahead unhindered.

Amusing Contretemps

IT IS related that Paganini used to play to the spiders in his garret, and that when certain of them flattened themselves out on his floor and seemed to luxuriate in his strains he felt certain he was playing well. A dog once took animal vengeance on him for this misemployment of honest creatures by howling dismally through the opening number of a Paganini program, and it is certain that the number of operatic performances rendered absurd by the sudden vocal demonstrations of some music-rapt canine is beyond estimate. Nowadays a dog has but to be seen in the outer environment of an opera house to start the machinery of ejection into rapid and incontinent motion.

The mishaps that freak many an operatic performance, the stupidities of certain performers will one day be gathered into a volume. They are endless. Milton Aborn likes to amuse his intimates with the story of a new barytone assigned to the rôle of Sharpless in *Butterfly*. The man gave an exceptionally fine performance without once glancing at the conductor for the beat, without the least heed for the prompter. Mr. Aborn complimented him afterwards.

"You must have sung the part very often to be so familiar with it. I noticed you never looked at the conductor once."

"Was I supposed to?" asked the startled and ingenuous singer.

The impresario found something to call him to another part of the house at once.

On another occasion Mr. Aborn was producing *Aida*, and had in his cast an enormous contralto in the part of Amneris. In the triumphal scene of the opera this lady is supposed to be borne upon the stage riding at ease on the shoulders of four blacks. It was seen that this ponderous lady might break the muscles of the stoutest suppers, and orders were given her to enter *à pied*. But when the Nile scene arrived there was trouble. The stage manager saw that the poundage of this singer would likely wreck the frail property boat, or at least cause the mechanism to creak woefully. So he took matters into his own hands and instructed the contralto to walk once more. Thus it happened that this lady came sailing down the blue breast of the Nile on foot.

Again, at the production of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* a new stage manager forgot or became confused. There is the scene in which the witch is put into the oven and baked. A property witch is substituted for the singer, and later dragged from the oven roasted to a turn. The new stage director made no such substitution, with the result that the door was opened in the following scene on an empty oven, an absurd mishap, calculated to destroy the whole illusion. The impresario taxed the stage manager bitterly.

"Why wasn't the witch put in the oven?"

"That's what I want to know," said the director innocently. "When I got up to his dressing room I found him washing up!"

But the most imposing of all laugh-producing opera mishaps, the accident that everyone has looked for and felt to be inevitable, lies concealed in every well-made production of Gounod's *Faust*. Whoever has seen this opera, or even the perennial dramatic version of Goethe piloted by the late Louis Morrison, will remember the use to which electric effects were put in the garden scene and in the duel. The sparks that fly from the sword of Mephistopheles when he interferes between Faust and Valentine have always provoked the wish that something might go wrong and his Satanic majesty be touched up with a jolt of his own fire.

The long expected happened in one of the Aborn companies. Electric plates

had been placed on the stage in the proper positions, plugs had been put into the heels, and the swords of the three fencers had been connected with wires. It was a warm night, and Mephistopheles had been wetting his vocal box with copious drafts of cold beer behind scenes. Whether the beer or his perspiration left his hand wet does not appear, but wet or damp it was. When he reached into the fray with his rapier and made the circuit he received the full and sudden impulse of one hundred and ten volts of lamplighting electricity. His arm flew up and hurled the sword into the flies. A roar of pain and rage escaped the basso and he made an impulsive dash for the exits. It was some little time before he was able to proceed with the duel—without electricity.

Such mishaps are by no means confined to traveling companies or to nameless artists. When Emma Calvé sang her first *Cherubino* in *Figaro* at Brussels she was thin, and the stage manager provided her with a set of symmetricals for her legs. In the course of the action these slipped around until they reposed on the great *Carmen's* shins, making a most grotesque figure of her and bringing down the house with blares of laughter.

When Andreas Dippel was guiding the misfortunes of the Chicago company he imported a very celebrated German tenor, who reached Chicago and was met at the train by Jules Daiber, the impresario's assistant. The tenor and his little wife were put into a cab and sent toward their hotel. Fifteen minutes later there was a telephonic storm. The tenor had left his grip in the taxi and all the balm was out of Gilead. In the bag was everything that made life worth while. Something must be done at once or all was lost.

The management sent men charging in every direction. They failed to find the taxi driver, but an hour later he showed up at the opera house in all calmness and handed in the lost bag.

The impresario saw visions of vanished jewels and stollen sheaves of bank notes. He telephoned the tenor at once and imparted the joyful news of recovery. The singer hurried to the theater, signed his relief at sight of his bag and put it aside while he talked business. One of the witnesses was touched to curiosity by the tenor's conduct, and when that worthy was out of sight he summoned the others and opened the grip. It contained two bottles of beer, some rye bread and a Straussburger sausage.

There is an abiding conviction among that class of Americans too sophisticated to believe in the surface of things and too casual to look beneath—those unhappy and cynical people who know nothing and believe nothing—to the effect that operatic careers are really reared upon the masonry of the press agent. The difference between one singer and the other cannot be one of ability, they hold. It is too simple to believe that there are in some human beings a talent and an artistic subtlety which lift them out of the ruck of ordinary achievement. Unfortunately many ambitious students have this notion firmly in mind, and many a singer who has failed to reach the top satisfies envy and spleen with this delusion. Last summer I heard a pretty and disillusioned soprano tell her dinner table that she might have been the most celebrated of our singers as well as another—"if I had got a backer and spent all my money on the right press agent."

Publicity Not Everything

ALL this is the sad nonsense of disappointment. It is true there is virtue in the bray of the publicity man, and many an artist has made his or her way to the all-important hearing and initial public attention by means of clever press work. It is also true that an arrived artist may keep his or her figure in the public eye by means of puffs and yarns in the papers. Again, it is undeniably true that an enormous amount of logrolling, wirepulling, favoritism, nepotism and intrigue enters into the conduct of opera companies and into the fortunes or misfortunes of singers. The same forces exert their pressures elsewhere as well—in business, in painting, in sculpture, in writing, in society, in every branch of human activity where individuals or groups are striving to be someone and get somewhere, to exceed the success of others.

But the girl or boy who sets out with the notion that money or publicity will elevate her or him to high position

(Continued on Page 36)



Mary Garden, During an Engagement in Paris

THE CHILD WHO CAME BACK

By **ETHEL TRAIN**

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR D. FULLER

LEONA LOWRIE, touring the West with the Number One company of *The Child Who Came Back*, stretched her beautiful young limbs in feline fashion, gave an order in a rasping voice to the colored maid, who paid not the smallest attention to it, and turned her back upon the low-ceiled, disorderly, ill-ventilated dressing room which had ungraciously consented to adapt itself to her multitudinous exactions for a period embracing six evening performances and two matinées.

There was a touch of the Oriental in Leona. Had there been a leopard skin available she would have used it for reclining purposes. She was a genuine blonde, without the blonde's ordinary indecisiveness of color, her hair not dust-colored, but yellow, her eyelashes not pale, but vivid brown. Her eyes were topaz, with orange rims, as perfect a match for the rest of her as the tawny eyes of a tortoiseshell cat. She had first attracted the notice of the urban public when, during the course of a somewhat miscellaneous career, she had drifted into the chorus of the *Vagaries* of 1918. She was not properly the build for a chorus girl, being too Junoesque; but Morris Behren, the producer, had known the moment he laid eyes on her that it would be sheer idiocy on his part to let her slip through his fingers.

"I've heard of you," he grunted. "Weren't you married to Ruff Tower when you were both in *The Jolly Wives*?"

She nodded.

"But that was over eleven months ago," she informed him. "He was killed afterward—at Bellenu Wood."

"Baby?"

"No."

As she uttered the monosyllable Leona's mind went back to the day when she had told her chorus-boy lover, so strangely metamorphosed into a hero since she had cast him aside, that if she married she never intended to have a child.

"Good!" said Morris to himself. "Gray matter!"

Before the revue had been running two weeks the Sunday supplements were full of her. Leona in profile, with straight nose, beautiful throat and inimitable nape about which the small hairs curled; Leona out walking in the park with her Pomeranian, regal, straight-shouldered, straight-hipped; Leona behind the footlights with the other girls, among but not of them—and so on *ad infinitum*.

Morris, taking his Sunday-morning ease in an armchair, with a black cigar in his mouth and the papers strewn all about, nodded several times and moved his hands up and down like the cheap china imitation of a mandarin that adorned his mantelshelf.

"One in a million! A sure winner!" he told himself confidently.

Forthwith he began to lay his plans. While Leona skipped about with the other maidens in the front row, he was combing the casts of his various productions for satellites to group about her when she should be a star. When all was ready he suddenly withdrew her from the *Vagaries* amid the loud lamentations of such young men as were in the habit of escorting her to the more fashionable

stupendous, so that in consequence the house was jammed. She could feel the surcharge of enthusiasm that greeted the first act's setting. She knew that she was going to make a hit; that the play was a sure-fire.

She always thrilled to it.

"Cue!" chanted the messenger. "Cue! Miss Lowrie!"

Lazily she stepped into the wings, caught her lines and turned into an adoring mother.

Upon the small inhabitant of that unconvincing, portable nursery with its automatic fire, its frieze of self-consciously stalking animals, its white-railed crib that nobody had ever slept in, and its one toy, broke Leona, with a soft, vivid, humanizing rush. Behind her pronged, gummed and blackened eyelashes her eyes shone with fervor.

The cry of mother love that broke from her eagerly parted lips caught half the audience by the throat.

A young man in the second row, taken unawares, tried to force down the lump shamefacedly. He was the rising physician of the town, Rhodes Harson by name, and he was attending the performance accompanied by his friend Nicholas Arnold, an intern in the Gambriel Memorial Hospital.

"Great stuff!" he whispered as he fumbled for his handkerchief.

"Stage stuff!" skeptically returned Arnold. "She probably spanks the kid's ears after the show."

"Not much!" retorted the other as the audience hung in suspense on the star's every movement.

Leona, presenting a pleading profile, had dropped to her knees, projected slightly forward and upward a wistful chin and opened wide her arms. The child's reaction to this gesture was touching. He slid skillfully down a crib rail, flung himself headlong across the intervening space and let her sweep him off his feet, straining him to her heart until his

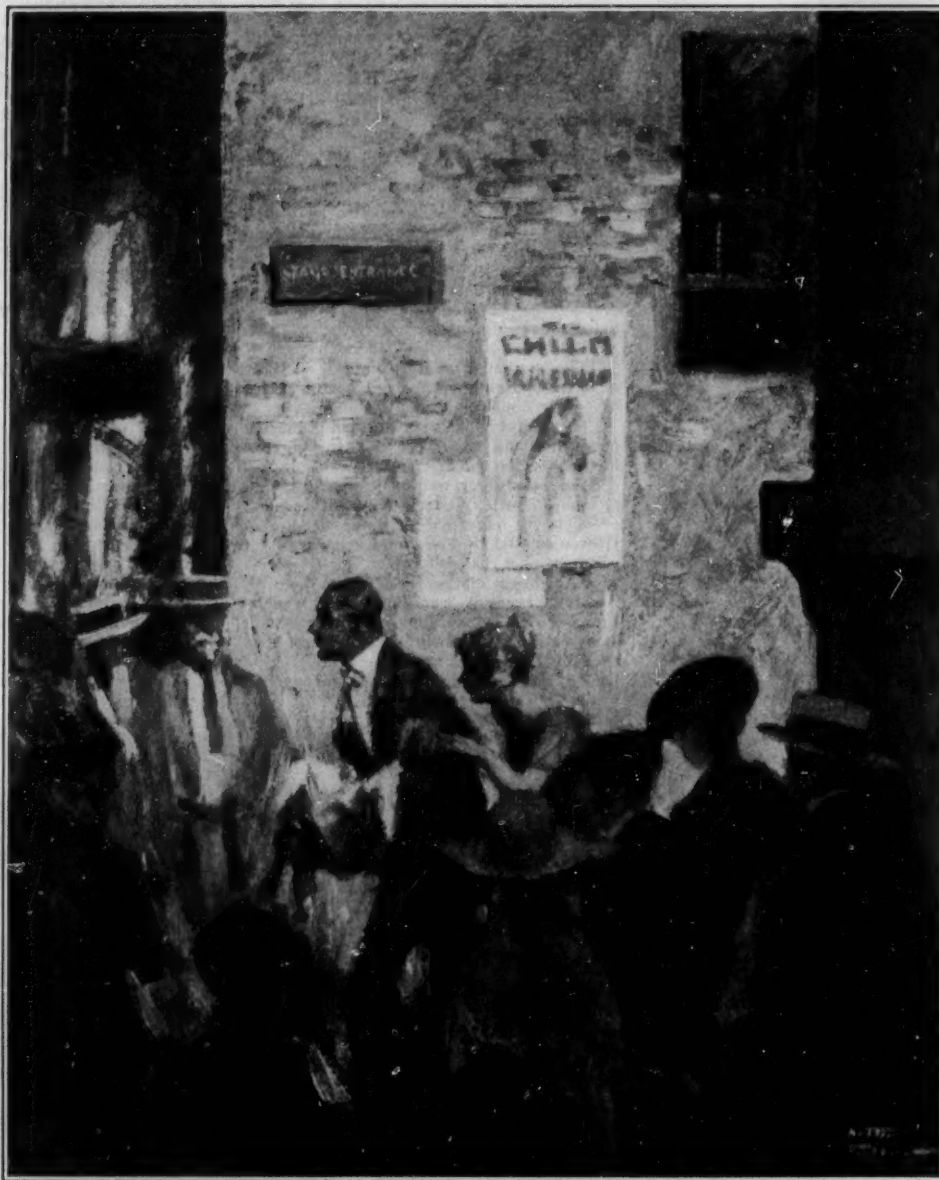
burnished, golden head was forced backward between his shoulders by the violence of the embrace.

Another knock-out!

That night they surpassed themselves. Leona was in the best of form. It had rained and broken the heat wave; she had slept eleven hours. Therefore she was a mother of mothers, and she stimulated Joe. When he romped with the bear he romped tremendously; when he was hugged he yielded utterly; when his last moment came he lay without the flicker of an eyelid, arms flung crosswise, cushioned palms up. And while Leona in a frenzy of apprehension was hanging over the prostrate child the house held its breath. When it was evident from her cry of anguish that he had breathed his last, tears rose to many eyes. Then the untoward happened. She flung herself athwart Joe's chest with an impact that all but cracked his breastbone, and he gave a vigorous wriggle.

"Ow!" he protested in an incautiously loud tone. "You hurt!"

Had the incident been observed? Leona could not tell. But whether or not, he had imperiled her success, the stupid brat! "Shut up, you little beast!" she hissed as the curtain dropped.



Apparently the Entire Audience Had Lingered in Front of the Theater. But the Crowd Parted With Pitying Glances to Let Them Through

restaurants at lunch time and attending the revue for the avowed purpose of feasting their eyes upon her every night. After that the show knew them no more.

When it became known on Broadway that Behren was giving her the leading rôle in his new play everybody said that he had gone blooey. The producer, smiling, let them rave on.

And Leona justified him by making a knock-out at Atlantic City, and the season's biggest hit. Now, on the road, her metropolitan success was being duplicated. After a breathless trip of one and two night stands, the company had arrived at its first considerable city, where the play was to run for an entire week.

This was the first night, and she was about to make her entry in the rôle of mother to her chief foil, a five-year-old boy who, clad in diminutive pajamas and anticking with an oversized Teddy bear of superior quality, was—pending it—the sole occupant of the stage. It might have seemed that a gown not quite so low cut would have accorded better with the part. However, Morris Behren knew his own business, as the whole theatrical world had now to admit. The show had been well advertised as having run two hundred nights in New York, and the posters of Leona were

Joe, looking up amazed, saw above him a face distorted with fury and two hands with enameled finger nails clawing the air in his direction after the manner of a hawk about to swoop.

"I'll teach you to gum my act!" she threatened in that low, ominous snarl that harked back to her beginnings in the slums. Morris Behren, recently arrived from the East and providentially hovering in the wings, darted forward and, at the risk of turning her anger upon himself, pulled her off bodily.

"Keep your temper, Leona!" he implored. "Don't you hear them clapping? Do you think they'd clap like that if they'd noticed anything? Do you want to put the whole business on the blink?"

To his surprise she did not berate him. Her anger arrested, she stared uneasily at the child.

"I've done it already," she said. "Look!"

His eyes followed hers.

Joe was sobbing convulsively, head buried in the pillow. Nobody had ever been unkind to him before. He was crushed.

She was accustomed to having her outbreaks received in various ways—with indifference, with cajolery, or with retaliations in kind. But the present situation was new to her. She had no idea of how to handle it. Morris was running heatedly up and down, hands in his hair.

"Do something!" he urged her. "Maybe they might hear, and think we were murdering him! You're a woman—you ought to know how to make it up with him!"

Leona bit her lips. She was not that sort of woman, and she knew it. Even when she was in good humor she had no love of children, loving only herself. Imperative though it was for her to conciliate Joe immediately, she was totally at a loss as to how to go about it.

"Honey," she began at length, employing the saccharine tone she usually reserved for the small, pointed ears of her Pom, "come along with Leona and she'll give you a great big chocolate afterward, all gooey inside."

But Joe only sobbed the louder. When she touched his shoulder he drew it hysterically away. Bereft of human sympathy, what were chocolates to him? He would have none of her, or of her bribery and corruption. He had learned what it was to be treated harshly, and the iron had entered into his soul.

Meanwhile the moments were passing, the applause was growing more insistent, the scene shifting was being held up. Joe's sobs had now reached the stage of strangulation, and catastrophe threatened.

In desperation Morris bent over and begged, "Joe, old man, be a regular fellow! Don't break up the show!"

To his immense relief he perceived that in framing his appeal as that of one good sport to another he had struck the right note. The child lay still for an instant; then he heaved a long, shuddering sigh. Then he turned, got out of bed, approached the producer, straightened the narrow shoulders that were just emerging into angularity out of the softest of curves, and stood gamely looking up.

"Joe don't want all the peoples to get their money back," he announced gravely. "Joe will be a good boy and not cry any more."

Leona held out two fingers to him, but he ignored them. Nevertheless he went forward quietly at her side.

"There's professional pride for you!" remarked Morris to a scene shifter, mopping his face with a flamboyant handkerchief of variegated silk. He added despondently, "It was a close squeak, though. That hell cat'll be the ruin of me yet."

Meanwhile the curtain was performing a series of gymnastics whereby the local scene painter's impersonations of Poesy, Tragedy and Comedy, executed upon heroic lines, leaped repeatedly upward with a speed disproportionate to their dignity, disclosing Leona and Joe in appropriate attitudes beneath.

"Pretty good acting," commented Nicholas Arnold, when at length the curtain's galvanic motions had ceased.

"No acting about it," returned Harson obstinately. "The girl's like a mother to that kid. For all we know, she may be his mother. Anyway, there's some sort of—er—affinity between them. Did you notice how she looked at him that last time? It's the real thing."

Arnold gave him a scornfully pitying glance.

"He's fallen for her already, the poor nut!" was his inward comment. But he kept his opinion to himself.

Joe Piexotto—the kid—had been until now the only person in the cast to stand in no fear of the temperamental Leona. This was not so much because she made a point of calling him in and giving him chocolates whenever he was led past her dressing-room door as because he was not afraid of anybody. He did his tricks joyously, like the little dogs in the circus that run races or chase balls—not under duress, like those whose lot it is to weave in and out among wheel spokes in imminent peril of bodily hurt.

The discovery of Joe had been the crowning stroke of fortune for Morris. He had turned over layers and layers of children to unearth a suitable one. Having succeeded beyond his brightest hopes—for Joe was a child that anybody would have noticed anywhere—he had encountered legal difficulties and complications on the score of the little actor's extreme youth. These had given way before his asseveration that the boy's mother would be kept with him

at all times to supply moral and physical care. He produced the mother to corroborate himself—a quiet, timid little thing, heavily veiled. She inspired confidence in the authorities, and so Morris put it over. If it had not been for the veil they could not have helped noticing that Mrs. Piexotto was so far gone in something or other that she was unlikely to last the winter out.

Behren had thought nothing of counseling the deception, since, to be certain that the ailment was not contagious, you had only to look at Joe; as clean-limbed, clear-eyed, physically and mentally sound a specimen as had ever breathed; the type of youngster that old gentlemen press nickels upon in the street and sentimental women yearn over. He had teeth like the little kernels of young corn, a dimple in either cheek, a skin of milk and roses and a laugh like a gurgling brook. Off stage or on, a more captivating child was seldom to be met. Perhaps because his earnings had relieved the pinch of poverty, perhaps because she knew—how well she knew!—that he had need of her, Mrs. Piexotto had not only miraculously hung on throughout the whole theatrical season in New York, but had agreed to go along with the road company when it entered upon an extended Western tour.

One parched afternoon, when the flies buzzed in the window of the tiny hotel bedroom she and Joe were sharing and she was trying to get some rest, the child, hearing a sound from the bed, looked up and saw a thin red stream trickling through her closed lips. He came over and pulled at her arm and called her, and when she did not answer he cried a little, for he was offended by her neglect, not knowing that she was dead.

Thus the wardrobe woman found them when she came in to notify them what o'clock it was. It was she who dressed Joe for his part that night, and she who now—if anybody should happen to ask him—was his mother, she said. When he demurred she impressed it upon him that those were Mr. Behren's orders, come through by telephone from New York, and added that if he wanted candy Joe must be a good boy and do what Mr. Behren told him. Then she asked him over and over again whether he understood, and Joe, having been reminded that his palate was likely to benefit by his concentration of mind, nodded vigorously every time.

Next day they went on, leaving Mrs. Piexotto in a box at the undertaker's, because their engagements did not permit them to linger long enough to see her put in the ground. No doubt her burial was accomplished without them in due course.

Subsequently Mr. Behren deposited Joe's pay in his own bank for him every week, and because he was not stealing

(Continued on Page 42)



In the Silence That Ensued No Sound Save the Little Boy's Light and Regular Breathing Was to be Heard. Leona Did Not Look Up

WHO LAUGHS LAST

By W. A. Fraser

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK STICK

AS DELILAH crossed the hotel rotunda she saw a well-known figure standing at the telegraph office. There was no mistaking that ensemble of dolorous gray: the big gray slouch hat, beneath it calm, uncommunicative farthing eyes; the large drab features almost engulfed in a wilderness of iron-gray scrub.

Delilah had a flitting thought anent the happy nomenclature that had labeled the patriarch the Man From the Desert. But this standing reproach against frivolity had an exhilarating effect upon Delilah; her eyes sparkled and, stepping forward eagerly, she held out a slim hand, a smile curving her lips away from beautiful, even white teeth.

"You've arrived, Mr. Andrews," she greeted. "And how is my horse?"

The patriarch turned his eyes from right to left warily, and answered at a tangent: "It's a mighty fine day, Mrs. Owen; a mighty fine day. Yes, ma'am, I'm purty well for a young feller; purty well. I kinder got a sore toe; if we could sit down in a quiet corner I'd —"

"We'll go up to the lounge, the corridor." She beckoned a page. "Just keep an eye for Mr. Owen, will you, lad? He'll be here in a few minutes; tell him I'm up in the corridor."

"I jus' got in this mornin'," Andrews said, taking a big, comfortable chair, "an' all my hawses is in good shape—never was better. I've been down to the track all day seein' the babies took care of. There's jus' a leetle somethin', Mrs. Owen, if you'll excuse me; I wouldn't say nothin' much 'bout Slipper Dance."

The patriarch brought forth a pocketbook and, taking from it a blue slip of paper, handed it to Delilah, saying, "Here's your check for thirty-one hundred."

Delilah started and let the hand that had lifted to take the check drop back in her lap; the black eyes, which when she was roused were almost vicious, seemed to burn into the somber, heavy-lined face of the Man From the Desert.

"What does this mean?" she asked. "You haven't cashed it?" A quick suspicion that Andrews meant to take advantage of his claim and keep the horse himself was rousing her to a fury.

"It means, Mrs. Owen," the patriarch answered slowly, "that I don't want to take no chance of that hawse goin' back to Barney Lee. If he could prove that I claimed him for you, an' prove that you owned him afore the thirty days is up, that's what'd happen. An' my hawses might

have to stand in the barn eatin' their heads off 'cause the stewards mightn't let me start a hawse. I heered a leetle somethin' at the bank

over in Windsor, an' I jus' didn't cash your check in. Barney Lee had been there askin' one of the boys somethin'—a boy he give some tips to—he was askin' if I'd cashed anybody's check for a biggish amount. You take it back, Mrs. Owen, an' keep it; an' when the thirty days is up I'll sell you Slipper Dance for that same amount, all sealed, signed an' delivered aforesaid. Then he can run in your name. I'll mos' likely start him here in my name, as his owner, an' nobody'll know nothin' 'bout what we're goin' to do. You keep it, Mrs. Owen, as I tell you"—as Delilah waved the check back to Andrews—"an' if the stewards asks me I can say I ain't had a dollar, an' paid for him myself."

Delilah held out her hand to the patriarch, reaction from the suspicion warming her impulsive nature. "Thank you, Mr. Andrews. You're a wonderfully thoughtful man."

"I guess if I hadn't kinder been a purty steady thinker in this game I'd be rubbin' down somebody else's hawse for a livin'; I couldn't keep away from them, anyway."

"Here's my husband," Delilah exclaimed as Stewart Owen stepped from the elevator and with his swinging stride came toward them, a hand outstretched and a smile gracing his greeting to the Man From the Desert.

"Just got in with the horses, eh, uncle?"

"This mornin'."

Owen swung his powerful frame into a chair, threw his hat to a lounge, and the smile was chased away by a tired look that crept into his eyes. "Well, uncle, minin' got racin' nailed to the mast for crookedness and a throw-down."

"Mr. Owen, I've sampled both of 'em, an' I'll present the peach stone to minin'. The racin' laws is handled by a bunch of high-class gentlemen; they've roughed me onct or twict, but I guess I was kinder careless; but minin' has got laws made a-purpose for shark lawyers to twist. There ain't nothin' to it but dollars. In hawse racin' there's the biggest sport on earth, an' there's some blue-blooded gents playin' it—big men that love hawses as hawses."

Into Delilah's eyes had crept a look of pained uneasiness; it wasn't often that her boy husband did anything but laugh, or chirp a few cuss words.

"What's wrong, Tootie?" she queried, and something in the timbre of her voice caused the Man From the Desert to turn his head and study her curiously.

A grin struggled to Owen's lips.

"Nothin' much wrong—just that I'm dished, I guess."

Andrews coughed. "Nobody ain't dished, son, till they give up; no hawse ain't ever beat till he quits."

"What is it, Tootie?" Delilah asked with quiet insistence.

"Wish I could buy a drink, uncle. This is when a fellow needs a friend," Owen declared at a sweeping tangent.

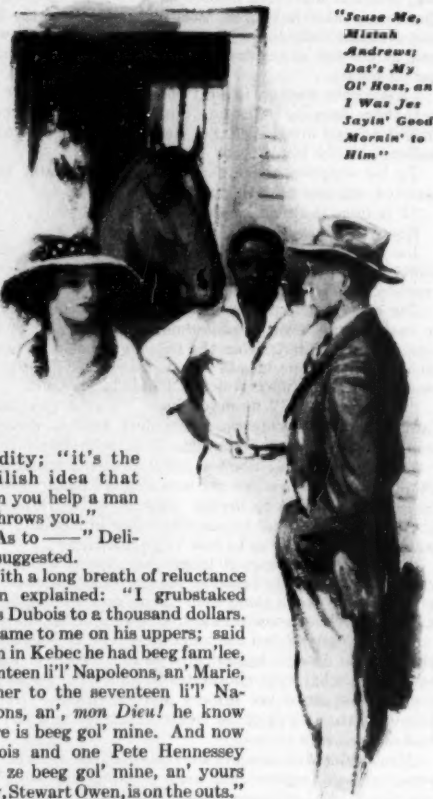
"Well, now, son," the patriarch remonstrated, "what's the matter with me? How do I stack up in this friend handicap? Ain't I an entry?"

"Yes, Tootie; if you won't tell me, tell Mr. Andrews."

"He's got troubles of his own, Lilah."

"I ain't got no troubles. I ain't been here long enough to owe a feed bill yet."

"Tisn't the money," Owen announced with mystifying



"Sense Me, Miziah Andrews; Dat's My Ol' Hoss, an' I Was Jes Jayin' Good Mornin' to Him"

lucidity; "it's the devilish idea that when you help a man he throws you."

"As to —" Delilah suggested.

With a long breath of reluctance Owen explained: "I grubstaked Jules Dubois to a thousand dollars. He came to me on his uppers; said down in Kebech he had beeg fam'lee, seventeen li'l' Napoleons, an' Marie, mother to the seventeen li'l' Napoleons, an', mon Dieu! he know where is beeg gol' mine. And now Dubois and one Pete Hennessey have ze beeg gol' mine, an' yours truly, Stewart Owen, is on the outs."

Owen laughed.

"Lovely, Tootie! Go on; you're an actor!" Delilah put her slim fingers on his arm, giving it a brave pinch of encouragement.

"Did you have a wrote agreement with him, son?" the patriarch asked.

"Sure thing, uncle." Owen drew a paper from his pocket and handed it to the patriarch. "And my lawyer says it isn't worth a damn!"

"Your lawyer knows what he's talkin' 'bout," Andrews affirmed after its perusal. "Two ostriches could've drew up a better one if they was plannin' to stake a nest."

"I guess Dubois got what they call an *avecat* to ring that in on me, an' I must've signed his copy without readin' it. Dubois just agrees to stake three claims, an' give me a half interest."

"Then you've got to have your half interest, haven't you, Stewart?" Delilah asked.

"Sure! I've got a half interest in three claims up in Bucke Township that're worth minin' whatever anybody'd pay for 'em. Havin' completed his agreement with me as per writin', Dubois hooks up with Pete Hennessey, an' stakes the Shinin' Tree over at Gowganda, an' the Shinin' Tree is some mine, believe me! They're sellin' it to a bunch of Johnny Bulls for one million round iron men. I've been fightin' 'em all day. Once I had that dang Frenchman by the throat, half across the table. I landed on Hennessey just once, an' he won't forget it in a hurry. Guess I'll be fined a hundred in the police court to-morrow; Dubois says that'll be a sure thing."

"I guess you was tryin' purty hard to convince them they was wrong," Andrews commented dryly.



And Owen, as the Buckskin Flashed Past the Winning Post All by Himself, Cried, "Oh, You Boy, You! I'm Some Picker!"

"I thought you looked tired when you came in, Stewart," Delilah remarked. "But I wouldn't get into any nasty squabble over it, boy; let them have the mine."

"I was in the minin' game for 'bout ten years," Andrews drawled; "an' if you let me train this Shinin' Tree hawse for you, Mr. Owen, I calc'late I could land half that purse." "Go to it, uncle; I'll split it with you, because it's all to nothin'." My lawyer says I'm all to the mustard."

"I don't jus' know the minin' laws here in Canada," Andrews declared thoughtfully, "but I guess purty nigh all the laws an' constitutions we got in God's country was tought on to us from England. Anyways, minin' laws is like Dan O'Connell said—that a feller could drive a coach 'n' pair clean through 'em."

"Get up on the box, uncle, an' bust it wide open," Owen laughed.

"I know one thing," the patriarch asserted: "the Englishers won't buy into no lawsuit; they won't touch a mine that the title ain't as clear's a Colorado sky."

Owen slapped his thigh. "Gad! I get you, uncle—I get you! I'll tell that bunch of Johnny Bulls that I'm part owner."

"Don't you do it, son; don't bet till you've drawn a good hand. I know a purty able lawyer here that'll tie up that deal so dang tight the Englishers'll go back to London an' dump the sov'reigns into a safe place. By heck, they will! This lawyer's got 'bout fifty ways o' cannin' a crook—'bout fifty ways; he's game too. I've see him lose a thousan' on a hewse an' grin over it same's someone had tickled him in the ribs."

"Me for that lawyer, uncle. I think my fellow is just a dub avocat."

"This chap'll put in a caution agen the property—I guess that's what they call it, a caution—an' when Dubois an' his buyers see that innercent leetle item in the newspapers they'll be callin' an' sendin' their cards up to Mr. Owen's room. Dubois'll want to kiss you on the cheek."

"You've got it, uncle," Owen declared. "You've run with the right bunch to educate you."

"Yes, sir; a man can't deal on honor with thieves. You put in a declaration that you want to bring a witness down from the minin' country to prove your suit; mos' like it'll take you a couple of months to find that man. An' the absence of 'em sov'reigns'll make Dubois' heart grow fonder. There'll be some promoter puttin' this deal through, an' he'll want to finger his commission, not carin' a hang who gets the money."

"You're right, uncle—there is. Ben Strong; he'll hound these guys to settle," Owen agreed eagerly.

"It's jus' the same's hawse racin'; a feller's got to declare somebody in or they'll put his hawse over the rail," the patriarch sighed. "To-morrer I'll take you over to see this lawyer —"

"Good! Now let's talk about something else," Stewart declared; "you've had enough of my troubles."

"Mr. Andrews says Slipper Dance is well, Stewart." And Delilah's face reclaimed the sunny look.

"Yes; purty good shape, purty good shape. The track here is kinder sof' 'cause there's been a leetle rain mos' every night. An' Saturday there's a five-thousand-dollar stake that don't look none too bad. Barney Lee had Slipper Dance entered in it when he owned him, an' he's got another hawse in it, Cornet; but if the track keeps like this Slipper Dance can trim Cornet."

"Well, uncle, you an' the racin' member of this firm of Owen & Co. will have to run that end of the business. I'll be danglin' Dubois at the end of a string." He turned to Delilah. "But don't come to me, girl, for a roll when you lose your money. Take a tip from me an' sell Slipper Dance."

Across the patriarch's impassive face there passed no cognizance of this thrust; with a hand he lifted the gray beard from off his throat and reached for the old gray slouch hat.

"Guess I'll toddle down to the Grapevine course. I'm havin' a new bar plate made for Slipper's tender foot that I guess is jus' a leetle bit better'n the one Barney Lee had on."

"I guess the one we got with the hawse the day I claimed him was his slow-runnin' boot—'cause he wasn't meant to win that day."

Next day Delilah sat up in the lounge waiting for the return of Stewart and Andrews, who had gone to consult with Mr. Bowen, the patriarch's lawyer. She had felt piqued over

Stewart's disparagement of her racing venture; perhaps that very racing venture would pull him through in his mining deal; money would be needed—plenty of it, she knew.

Like most beginners in this fascinating enterprise she visioned the possibility of an El Dorado. The affair of Condor, where she had won twelve-thousand-odd with so much seeming certainty, had bitten into her blood. It would be lovely to be the one to supply the money to thwart Dubois in his stealing of this valuable mine; it would be a delicious scoring over Mister Tootie, who looked upon her more or less as a pretty woman of whims and notions.

Then Andrews and Owen returned and came up to where Delilah had said she would wait. Owen had recovered his buoyancy; he was the boy Tootie redivivus.

"Uncle's lawyer, Bowen, is hot stuff," he assured Delilah. "He knows this Dubois—the little Frenchman crooked him once on a deal—and he says the way to negotiate with him is to sandbag him. He's now writin' out a caution against the Shinin' Tree claim; he'll file it in the lands-and-titles office to-day, an' to-night Dubois and the two Englishmen who are here negotiating the sale will read all about it in the evening paper."

"Splendid!" Delilah commented.

"An' I guess Sir William Macklin'll scratch his hawse outer that Shinin' Tree race," the patriarch vouchsafed.

"That's one of the Englishers," Stewart advised. "They'll all just sit tight now till Dubois clears this up."

A brilliant smile displayed the strong, even white teeth of Owen as he turned the chair toward Delilah to ask: "You haven't got twenty thousand bucks hid away anywhere, girl, have you?"

"Why, Stewart? It hardly seems enough, does it?"

"Well, this clever geeser, Lawyer Bowen, says that if I deposit a marked check for twenty thousand dollars with the Deputy Minister of Mines it would show my bona fides. Sounds good, doesn't it?"

"And knowing you as I do, Stewart, I fancy you promised to put it in his hands to-morrow; a little thing like that wouldn't stop you."

Owen parried this mellifluous compliment. "Bowen says that the party of the second part, that habitant Dubois, will try to have the caution removed by stating that I'm an adventurer. What d'you think of that, knowin' me as you say you do? He'll claim he'll be put to a heavy loss unjustly, an' won't be able to collect damages. Get it? Why, these rocks I'm wearin' represent more money than the whole Dubois breed for generations back ever saw."

"You oughter put up that twenty thousand, Mr. Owen," the patriarch interposed. "It'd be a mighty good bluff; they'd quit, gallopin'."



"Mos' Fellers Think I'm 'Bout a Hard's a Brick," He Said Grimly

"Well"—and Stewart sighed resignedly—"as I said before, girl, you're runnin' the racin' end of it; go ahead. If you make good I'll declare you an' uncle in on the mine deal. If I can hold Dubois up good an' plenty he can't settle with me under a hundred thousand at least."

"That's settled then, Mr. Andrews," Delilah declared, and her lithe, sinewy figure drew up in an attitude of decisiveness. "I'll go down to the course with you in the morning and whisper in Slipper Dance's ear that I need the money; I'll give him a lump of sugar, and kiss him on his soft muzzle, and he'll win—won't he?"

"He might; he'll come purty near winnin'—purty near. I'll give him a good workin' gallop to-morrow—that's Friday—an' Saturday I shouldn't wonder that he'd be on the job. I'll try the new plate on him to-morrow mornin', an' when he's been cooled out if he don't favor that off fore-foot none I'll figger that we've got Barney Lee trimmed again."

Next morning Owen, roused from his early slumber by Delilah's spring from bed at the jangle of the phone call, was sulky; he complained that this being married to a racing woman was getting on his nerves; it would wind up in their being cleaned out.

Delilah as she quickly slipped into a serviceable tweed sang tantalizingly, "Hush-a-by baby on the tree top."

Of course, naturally, this exasperated the sleepy man; but Delilah, full of the wine of youth and glorious health, laughed, winding up with "If you'll just stay in bed for a week I'll land that hundred thousand mine money for you. Good-by."

And never was such a morning—a glorious crisp ocean of sunshine; a tonic to cause a healthy mind to essay and conquer great projects; to embrace a stout heart. The flat open of the Grapevine course with a rich green Wilton rug spread all over its infield; and, beyond, the blue waters of Lake Ontario stretching away to the gold-amedared horizon.

Like happy spring birds perched on the rail of the course were horse watchers; clockers, stable boys; a continuous ripple of badinage evoking laughter such as is heard at playtime in a school yard.

And the thoroughbreds, too, were at play. Fed and groomed and rested, like athletes in training, they were as if they homed in some rich-foddered prairie-land where drudgery had never thrust its hydra head of toil.

In ecstasy Delilah cried out in sheer joy, "Isn't it good to be alive, Mr. Andrews?"

"Kinder," the old man answered solemnly; "but life's so dang short that a man generly gets to my age afore he notices what's wuth while an' what ain't. If I could begin all over agen I guess I'd get more fun outer life. It ain't chasin' the fas'-rollin' dollar that's the whole thing; that comes purty nigh jus' bein' a workin' gallop. 'Em boys

(Continued on Page 30)

"I've Been Fightin' 'em All Day. Once I Had That Dang Frenchman by the Throat, Half Across the Table"



THE TEMPLE OF LUCK

Lead me to de woods whah de luck trees grow,
 Haw' me de az when it's time to chop.
 Lead me kinda gentle, git me started slow;
 When I gits to goin' watch de buck trees drop.

By HUGH WILEY

ILLUSTRATED BY J. J. GOULD

fust annex is de Swami Chu'ch, based on de mystic teachin' of Swami, de Indian Buddha. Nex' do' in de temple de sooprem faith healer thrives an' collects money f'm folks whut only thinks dey's sick. Cross

de hall is de chief palm-readin' Magi, predictin' pas', present an' future fo' a dollah. In de temple annex is de offices of de 'Filiated Culled Union of de Worl'. Dis union is mitigated into th'ee gran' divisions—de Bullshevik, de political an' de social. Desocial has de ladies' annex."

Honeytone's eyes played steadily across his audience horizontally, and his voice shot straight at the ears of the assemblage, but his imagination started up, and now it made its final flight.

"Dat's all I tells you, 'ceptin' my own humble efforts will be directed at organizin' a New World African colony in de free country of Brazil. Dat's all. Fo' each an' ev'ry project us needs a deppity sooprem leadeh. Dese will be 'pointed f'm amongst you. Each deppity sooprem leadeh adorns hisself wid de gilt-edged robes of de 'propriate responsibility an' collects de cash.

"Deppity collector fo' each deppity leadeh likewise weahs de robes whut de ritual describes. Ritual c'mmittee gits a percentage of de receipts. Deppitys gits one dollah fo' ev'ry three whut's took in. Any income oveh twenty dollahs a day goes to de social an' festive departments."

The orator pulled a little book out of his pocket.

"Hopin' you elects steady an' reliable frien's fo' de 'sponsible offices, us now opens de 'scription books fo' de temple fund, payin' int'rest

a hund'ed per cent ev'ry week. Pussonly I donates a hund'ed dollahs to stahd de ball rollin'."

Honeytone knew his crowd.

"How much, brotheh? Sign yo' name. Cash. C'tificate in green an' yaller wid de gol' seal will be conferred at de fust conclave of de sooprem leadehs of departments an' de gran' deppitys. Gimme dat bill. I has change, brotheh."

Late that night, escorted by a committee a little more sooprem than the body of the mob, Honeytone walked back to his hotel room. On his way to the hotel the uplifter pondered the question of conduct affecting his immediate future. To blow or not to blow—that was the question. He reviewed the hills and valleys of the land of promise over which his galloping vocal organs had hauled the hopes of his hearers. He decided that the business of making good would involve considerable work. The work part failed to attract him. He decided to bid the committee a long farewell at the hotel without their knowing it, but his decision suffered a veto in the persistence with which the three sooprem deppitys stuck to their walking treasury department.

In his room Honeytone made a final effort to side-step the escort. He removed his coat and hung it on a chair.

"Now, wid de cares whut infests de day relegated to de bosom ob de past, I lays me down an' sleeps. Brothehs, I hopes you all enjoys de boon of ol' Lady Nature's sweet restorer, an' I sees you to-morr' at —"

"You sees us now." A heavy-set deppity grunted a verdict. "Gimme 'at quilt an' I makes down mah pallet on de flo'."

Without implying anything pussonal, another of the sooprem trio laid himself down close against the door.

The uplifter knew a bear trap when he saw it. He pillowed his rangy jaw on the comforting outlines of the lumpy treasure in the pocket of his vest beneath his head.

"Talk sure is cheap," he reflected. "Talk is cheap, but sometimes you can trade big words for big money."

A violent snore answered him, and again hope mounted to his heart; but presently he realized that only one of his associates was sleeping.



Festooned With the Yellow Sash,
 Lilly Did the Best She Could to
 Make Lady Luck Respond, But
 Lady Luck Was Deaf. Lady Luck
 Was A. W. O. L.

WHILE the Wildcat was doing his best to forget the cares that nominally infested his official day as porter on the Blue Fozant special car, sidetracked in San Francisco, Honeytone Boone, the brunet uplifter, languished in the Memphis jail. There were two sides to every jail. To the Wildcat, the loser in the law's game generally occupied the inside. Honeytone was different. The inside of a jail for Honeytone was often a place of sanctuary from which the occupant might sneer serenely at the disappointed female perils who gnashed their teeth outside the bars.

In San Francisco the days were warm, and Lilly the mascot goat had returned to her master's side. The Wildcat was playing even in the matter of daily rations. Trailing along in the wake of a pair of golf-playing nobles of the Mysterious Mecca at the Lincoln Park Golf Course provided a cash surplus which enabled the Wildcat to discard his winter-weight Prince Albert and to adorn his person with a retiring suit of clothes three shades lighter than a sunburned pumpkin and embellished with six-inch checks. Life wa'n't so bad. Ol' railroad sleepin' car was probably doin' all right.

Reasonably sure that to-morrow would lug in new brands of trouble to pester a boy with, the Wildcat steered his somnolent mentality clear of the shoals of surmise and let to-morrow take care of itself.

A boy never could tell about Lady Luck. Every time the Wildcat did something that clearly entitled him to free board in some permanent jail, like as not next day he would wake up all festooned with gold watches. Take a preacher's advice and head down the straight-and-narrow path, and the chances were that some deppity sheriff with a shotgun, or else a bear, would be waiting in the path right where the heaviest canebrakes discouraged detours.

II

One man's pizen is anotheh man's meat;
 Mah troubles never bother you.
 Hog needs wings like a snake needs feet;
 De question ain't why, but who.

HONEYTONE BOONE'S downfall had been accomplished in Memphis immediately subsequent to a Konkrin Heroes parade. There had been some talk about the ownership of the mule which Honeytone rode. The line of march headed straight for Honeytone's wife and his potential soul mate, and culminated in a ruckus from which Honeytone emerged safe in the talons of a policeman. The two women, comparing notes, had gummied up the leader's grand entry to a degree which left Honeytone thankful for the mule-stealing charge that had landed him safe in jail and out of the clutches of his wife and Cuspidora Lee. He enjoyed sanctuary in jail for two months; and then, threatened with an embarrassing and abrupt release, he concentrated on a hurried mental incubation. Hard pressed, he sought to hatch from the bad egg of circumstance some new enterprise which would take him away, sudden and safe, from where his memorizing wife awaited him.

His mind roamed wild through the fields of questionable enterprises opened to him by a combination of easy conscience and the flashy part of a college education. On the day of his release he half regretted his education. Ignorance cursed the individual with work, but it left him free of the higher responsibilities and the more acute penalties of transgression, and just then Honeytone wished

devoutly that he was a field hand. He craved a black complexion instead of the halfway color that barred him from the unquestioning comradeship of white and black alike.

On the night of his release from jail he beat the barrier, and by morning he was well on his way to St. Louis, resolved to explore the Pacific Coast for fields wherein his peculiar abilities might enable him to reap the harvest of cash without which life to him was naught.

En route West, Honeytone managed to keep one state ahead of his reputation. Thus he avoided the iron impedimenta which the laws of the land drape around the ankles and feet that stray from the straight-and-narrow trail, around wrists and hands whose idleness affords the devil welcome opportunity to function as a labor agent.

Honeytone's first week in Oakland found him preaching to a small congregation. On the following Sunday he announced to his flock: "Gether together dat ye can hear de words ob wisdom. De prophet knowed whut he said when he perdicted dat somebody was comin' to lead his chillun f'm darkness into light. 'At's me! Somebody! I leads you out o' darkness into de promised lan' whah flows de milk an' honey. In passin', lemme add dat 'milk' is f'm de ol' language used by de Sanskrits, meanin' gin. Honey f'm de ancient Cheeko-Slowfat word 'Honito.' Dat's dey word fo' chicken—fried chicken, to be mo' precier."

"Brethren, rally roun' an' 'sorb whut I orates. Men, you is sons of kings f'm Africa. How come you all re-doomed to de state of slaves? Because yo' brains and yo' brawns is all spread out, desicated on triflin' things like cotton crops an' cawn, sweatin' unde heavy loads 'stid of rulin' at de seat of guv'ment an' dictatin' whut's whut."

The orator dragged in another lungful of midnight fog and broke into the stretch.

"Heah's de answeh, graved on de gol' tablets an' dug up in de midnight moon wid a luck spade. Gran' oaks f'm li'l' acorns grow. Heah in San F'mcisco, wid de aid of you-all, we starts de new movement to'ards de Canaan Land. Fust off, us organizes de Temple o' Luck. Den de

With the sleepers changing shifts every hour or so, the long night passed. By dawn Honeytone was resolved to give his schemes a run for their money. You never could tell how a scheme might turn out, and the colonization business sounded pretty good, even to its overstressed inventor.

III

THE convention of the nobles of the Mysterious Mecca dwindled into the final stage that attends all conventions. Golf was eliminated and business was the order of the day.

The Wildcat suffered indirectly, being threatened with a resumption of his responsibility as porter on the special car that had brought the Chicago contingent west to San Francisco. A sense of restraint gradually killed off the wild free business of roaming the Lincoln Park Golf Course at so much per roam, eating heavy on the proceeds and sleeping twelve hours a day.

Arrayed in his yaller raiment, he sought the offices of the Pullman Company and got confidential with the office boy.

"Ise de poteh fo' de Blue Fezant boys—dis heah Mysterious Mecca business. Dey tells me us leaves fo' Chicago real soon. Ah jus' been down at de deepo lookin' fo' de cah. Whah at is dat cah? Me an' Lily aims to git it swep' out befo' de gemmum comes."

The office boy took the Wildcat's message to an inner office. Two minutes later the answer came back in the person of a gentleman who was trying to hold his temper.

"You're fired! You started with your car in Chicago, left it in Wyoming and here you are! Git out of here before I —"

"Cap'n, yessuh!" The Wildcat knew a gesture when he saw it. He retreated, dragging his mascot goat a little too fast for Lily's comfort.

"Goat, dog-gone you, whut fo' did you go A. W. O. L. an' git us bofe loose f'm dat railroad job? Heah us is, wid only fo' bits, an' all yo' fault."

Lily admitted the charge in a plaintive bleat which softened the harsh language which her master was bellowing at his mascot in the din of Market Street. Presently the Wildcat forgot the acute misery of not having any hard work staring him in the face.

"Us has fo' bits. At's mo' money dan mos' folks has. Lily, us eats."

I don't bother work, work don't bother me.

Ise fo' times as happy as a bumblebee.

Us eats when us kin git it, sleeps mos' all de time —

At a lunch counter on Sutter Street, much frequented by members of his race, the Wildcat spread the fifty cents out over rations that made up in mass what they lacked in delicacy. Halfway through the meal he slacked up enough to get talkative. The boy next to him at the lunch counter was confronted with enough food to hold him for a few minutes, and it was at this more fortunate individual that the Wildcat directed his remarks.

"Podneh, whah at kin a boy locate a job of work in dis yere town?"

"Whah you f'm?"

"Me an' mah mascot hails f'm Memphis."

"How come you so fah f'm home?"

"Boy, whah at did you meet up wid so much wantin' to know?"

"Good many jail niggers loose. Thought maybe —"

"Don't think no mo'. Don't think nuther word 'bout me an' Lily. I come f'm de Ahmy. Two yeahs in France, an' lately I lef' de Pullman railroad people whut hires sleepin'-cah potehs. At's all. Ain't no jail connected wid me. All I craves is a job whut pays money."

"De wages at de docks unloadin' steamboats is ten dollahs a day. Depen's on how much money you needs. Dey wants stevedo's bad. Dey's a strike."

"Boy, dey has me! Ise a bad stevedo'. Whah at is dis boat-unloadin' bizness?"

The boy revealed the location of the ten-dollar job.

"You trails along afteh you gits to de watch whah de big boats is. Half a mile f'm de ferry buildin' you sees a gang standin' round. Them's strikers. You goes through an' de boss shows you whah to head in. Does you know de stevedo' bizness?"

"I'll say us does! Me an' de res' of de Fust Service Battalion unloaded all de boats whut landed in France durin' de wah. How come you ain't workin' yo'self at de ten-dollah job?"

"Ise a 'vestor. 'Vested some cash in a new o'ganization whut was instigated heah lately. Pays big. Two fo' one ev'ry week. You gives de ol' soopreem leadeh fifty dollahs, an' nex' week back he comes wid a hund'ed. You hol's out some an' 'vests de res'. Nex' week you reaps agin. Pays fifty, gits a hund'ed."

"Whah at is dis soopreem man?"

"Thought you tol' me you was broke. How come you lie so?"

"Ain't said no lie."

"Youse broke, ain't you? What good does dis soopreem man do you 'less you kin 'vest wid him? Git yo' job, an'

when you has beginnin' money I meets you an' reveals whah at is de gol' mine."

"Meet you heah nex' Sat'd'y night. At's pay night, I s'poses."

"You s'poses right. Ah meets you Sat'd'y."

"Sho' will! Podneh, whut name is you favored with? I goes by name of Wilcat. By rights I was baptized Vitus Marsden." The Wildcat held out the hand of brotherhood.

"Call me Trombone when you calls confidential," his companion replied. "By rights I is Pike Canfield, but folks calls me Trombone eveh since me an' de name got famous. Mebbe you is heard of me. I plays de slip horn."

"Sho' I is, many's de time! So you is Trombone, is you? Sho' proud to meet up wid you. Sho' 'bliged fo' de knowledge concernin' de ten-dollah job. Soon as I 'cumulates some pay day me an' Lily meets you heah nex' Sat'd'y night. Den us 'vests wid de soopreem leadeh an' mebbe has a gran' ruckus wid de profits."

That night the Wildcat slept free and chilly on a park bench, covered only with the blanket of fog which rolled in at midnight. Shortly after dawn, with Lily at his heels, he walked to the entrance of the pier against which lay a cargo ship loading for a famine area in Europe.

"Whah at is de man whut hires de han's?" he asked.

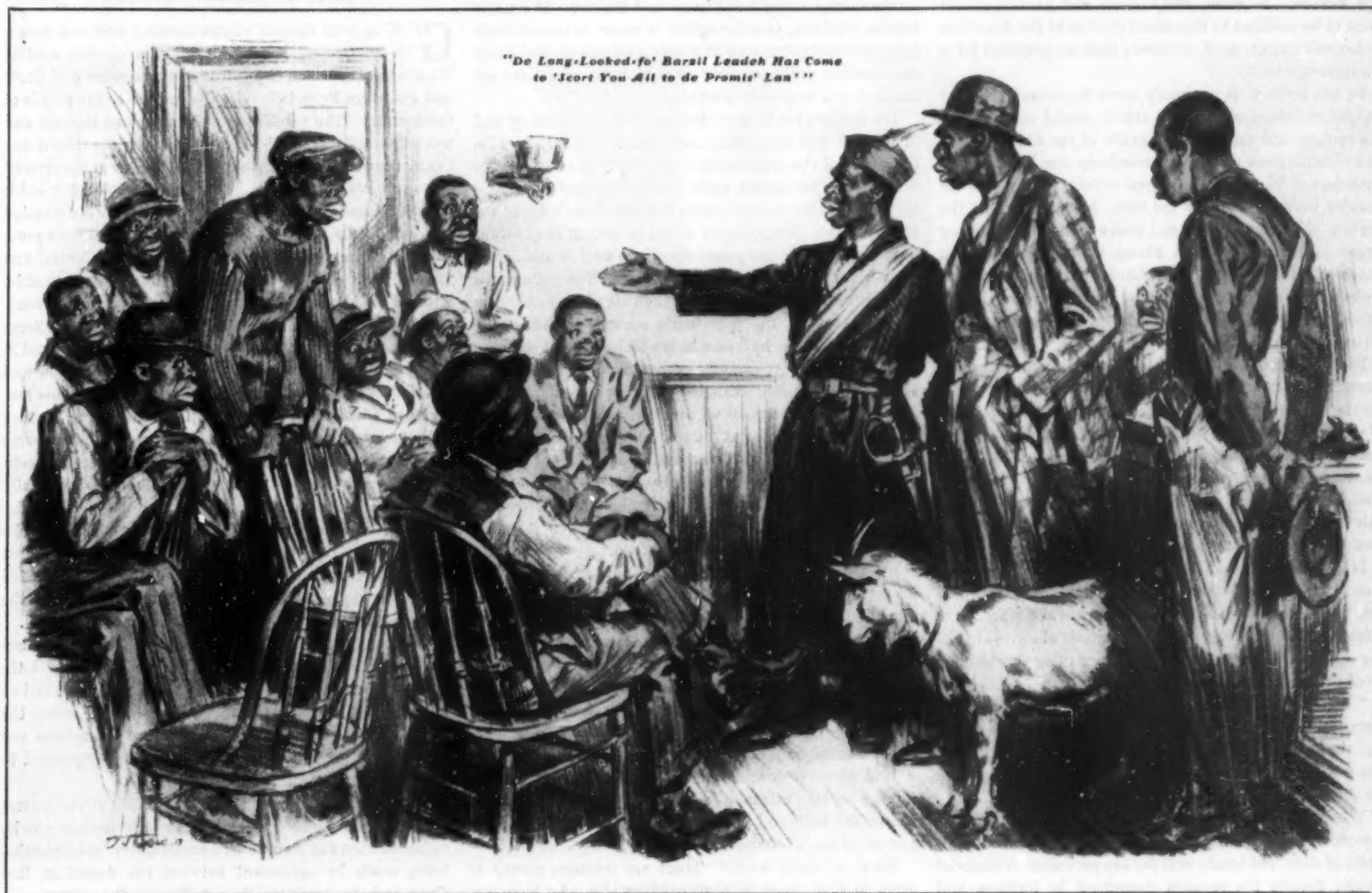
Two hours later the foreman of the dock gang was pointed out to him, and in ten minutes, with Lily tied to a barrel of nutritious pickles, the Wildcat took his place in the long line of stevedores that hustled freight out of the pier shed and into the nets under the cargo booms of the ship.

"Lily, to-night us eats on credit an' sleeps inside some place whah de fog weatheh don't git."

All of the stevedore crew were members of the Wildcat's own race. Before noon he had affiliated with enough friends to make the matter of noontime lunch a simple business of accepting part of what was offered him, while Lily did the best she could on enough assorted nutriment to feed six mascots.

Considering the start he had made that morning, the Wildcat realized, with his seventh sandwich, that life isn't so bad, if you manage to live through it. When he began the afternoon shift his ancient philosophy had returned, and to the clatter of the activity about him he contributed his rambling voice. Presently the words of his song recruited a few converts from the gang about him, and by four o'clock, with the freight moving faster than

(Continued on Page 26)



"De Long-Locked-fo' Barzil Leadeh Has Come to 'Scort You All to de Promis' Lan'."

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PHILADELPHIA, JULY 9, 1921

The Boy Banker and His Creed

IT is fortunate for the permanence of our national institutions that the more unpleasant qualities are not wholly geographical in their distribution. If all the citizens of New York and Paris spent their evenings in the great white ways of their respective cities it would be time, indeed, to lament over the decadence of the United States and France. If greed, recklessness and gambling ever come to be confined to that small portion of the American metropolis known as Wall Street, then be prepared for a national explosion.

In one sense it is obviously more important that the highest standard of business ethics should exist among the bankers and capitalists generally of the smaller towns and villages than among the relatively few bankers and financiers of Wall Street. It goes without saying that the country must be sound at the core. Nor perhaps did the passing of the Great War and postwar inflation find any larger proportion of Wall Street bankers singed with unsuccessful syndicate operations, participations and underwriting engagements than were their less conspicuous fellows in the Middle West, Southwest and Far West with oil leases and real estate.

But banking in Wall Street, because of its very conspicuousness, size, concentration and tremendous power, needs for the national welfare to be conducted with a keen sense of public duty. It needs to be in the hands of men who, not to talk in the language of mushy idealism and not to use that much-abused word "service," nevertheless regard banking at least as a profession and a permanent solid career rather than as an opportunity to grow quickly, suddenly and spectacularly rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

It has been said that the legends of a people indicate its true state of mind better than its history. Listen then to the tale of a young man to whom, so runs the report, was offered not so very long ago the presidency of a great banking concern. Ponder well his legendary reply to what one would regard as an inviting tender:

"You are very kind, gentlemen of the board of directors. I appreciate the compliment, but the salary is only seventy-five thousand dollars a year, and you are opposed to having the president of the bank speculate. I can't afford to live on such an income and on such restrictive terms."

Whether literally true, or false in every detail, this anecdote strikes at the spirit of greed, of lowered standards, of distorted ideals, still far so prevalent in financial circles despite the revision downward in fortunes and

reputations so mercilessly effected by the process of industrial and financial deflation. The change of heart and viewpoint from that of 1919 still needs to go much farther.

The vast expansion of banking and financial machinery in Wall Street has brought with it an imperative need for men, and young men at that. They are for the most part young men with pep, pleasing personalities, often with good connections, always with splendid force and energy, good business getters, fresh, vigorous young fellows, usually good golf players, always good mixers, and having a little knowledge of banking. These are the sort that find themselves in positions of power and responsibility in huge organizations which have grown so fast and furiously that only another legend, one that Wall Street especially chuckles and snickers over, can tell the story:

A new and young vice president of what shall be called the Mammoth National Bank went to a fashionable Southern resort for a vacation at golf. On the links he found a very pleasant stranger and they played around together.

At the end of the morning one of the men said to the other: "By the way, my name is So-and-So, vice president of the Mammoth National Bank of New York. What is yours?"

"That's interesting," replied the other. "I'm also a vice president of that bank."

In his new position the young man finds that he travels in fast company, financially speaking. The salary which seemed so large when offered to him now looks very small. For he discovers that other men in such positions have country places on Long Island. So must he. He must keep up appearances, go to the proper resorts in summer, winter, spring and fall. He must at all hazards live like a millionaire; but not being a millionaire, having only his salary, and being too young to have accumulated a fortune by the ordinary slow process of saving, what is the poor fellow to do?

Well, it takes no genius on his part to see how to make ends meet. He is now high up in a powerful financial organization. He has become a Napoleon of finance. His institution handles a bewildering array of syndicates, underwritings, loans, bond issues and the like. It is made trustee, registrar, transfer agent; it comes in contact with large corporate financing at a thousand points, and as an organization quite properly so. Millions of dollars are handled as if they were pennies.

The young man forgets that much of his intimacy and familiarity with these deals and operations is only because he is part of the organization. Suddenly risen to a place of influence, he cannot resist the feeling that he is in a favored position to profit through inside knowledge of the stock market. He goes into a deal or two on easy terms, because naturally the promoter of the deal is anxious to be on a good footing with bank officers. The young man not only makes more in one deal than his whole salary, but more even than the president's seventy-five-thousand-dollar salary. Now he is sure he is a Napoleon of finance.

Speculation, recklessness, extravagance—all filled the air. Then conditions changed. There was a silk panic in Japan. Deflation spread all over the world. The market went down for months at a time. Directors held all-night meetings and the riot act was read to a number of the boy bankers. There were hints of investigations, of the washing of dirty linen in public. But the banking system was sound at heart. The Federal Reserve gave it added strength, and the storm was weathered.

But the point of this editorial is not historical. To serve his stockholders, his depositors and the public the banker must be in a sufficiently independent position to say no as well as yes. This he cannot do if he is watching the tape with his own private fortune in mind. Outside pecuniary interests divert the banker's mind and energies from his own important duties and impair his usefulness, because consciously or unconsciously his decisions and judgments are controlled by interests other than those of the bank.

It all simmers down to what is worth while in life. Is it a large country estate, a fortune and a fearsome position among the bulls and bears before one is forty, or is it the respect of one's fellows and the community?

What is worth while? There are bankers, plenty of them in Wall Street and everywhere else, who have not

been bitten by the newer and larger extravagance. Probably the great majority of officers in banks, large and small, in all parts of the country are not open to criticism. But who are the leaders who always have been the real leaders of banking? Not the plungers, the speculators, the manipulators, but the conservative, steady men in whom their fellows have confidence, wholly regardless of whether they have made large fortunes for themselves by the time they are forty or not.

Every city has its honored, respected leaders in the banking field, and it is these men of character and ability, not the skyrockets, who assume control of the situation when a panic breaks. They are the men who carry to their graves a treasure of reputation and standing in the community that far exceeds all riches. The chairman of the board of directors of one of the great metropolitan banks has been associated with rich men all through his long business life. His modest fortune, less than that of many a young plunger of half his age, has come only through more than sixty years of hard work and slow investment of savings.

His good name, however, is worth more than the combined fortunes of a hundred boy bankers—a name which, by the way, refers not so much to the youthfulness of the persons described in actual years as to their juvenility of character. Nor is this old gentleman alone. There are many others like him, of all ages, stalwart, respected, responsible, interested primarily in the safety and good name of their own institutions, in their own personal reputations and in the safety of banking in general, rather than in the sudden blooming of their fortunes.

It all comes down to what one wants. Does a young man want to be known as merely smart, or would he also like to be considered able? Is it respect, honor, comfort, a continued position of responsibility and leadership and a gradually accumulating competency and fortune through the years? Or is it a quick scoop, getaway and retirement? Retirement to what? Certainly not to honor and respect.

When Winter Comes

GIVE us your cast-off winter clothing now and save a life in Central Europe during the coming winter! That is the call which comes from the American Red Cross and American Friends Service Committee to the people of this country. The need for protection against the cold and wet will be greater abroad within a few months than it was in any previous year. The old rags of Europe that survived the war have fallen apart. The supply of clothing which American agencies in Europe have on hand for distribution will cover only a few of the many thousands who must freeze if America does not help liberally. In Central and Eastern Europe even the man who has work is unable, with his present wages, to buy clothes at prevailing prices. The American Red Cross and the American Friends Service Committee have their representatives on the ground in Europe and have the machinery for transportation and distribution of gifts. But they must have much more material to allot before September if the need is to be even approximately met. They ask for second-hand warm garments for men, women and children which are in condition to wear; for worn but serviceable shoes, especially those which are broad and with low heels; for baby clothes of all kinds and for material from which to make up clothing; for knitted garments and for wool to be knitted by the European mothers. Contributions will be allotted according to the country designated, if so indicated by the donor; otherwise they will be used where most needed.

This is a cry for help directed to every American household which can spare clothing or the money to buy clothing; to every American woman who knitted or sewed so industriously during the war. In the name of mercy the appeal should be answered with the same promptness and in the same generous spirit with which we responded to the call of patriotism.

Contributions, however small, may be left at the nearest Red Cross station the country over, or information may be obtained from any Red Cross representative, the collection being made by agreement between the American Red Cross and the American Friends Service Committee.

THAT DISTINCTIVE FEEL

MY CHUM and I had come down from college to New York for a week-end. We also had come for some new neckwear. Soft collars were all the rage at that time, but I had never been able to get one that would sit nicely on my rather short neck without wrinkling.

A wealthy young fellow, the Beau Brummell of our dormitory, wore collars that were the envy of every boy in school. He told me that he bought them from a haberdasher in Fifth Avenue. Jim and I headed for that store the minute we got off the train.

Though my father owned one of the biggest department stores in New York, it never occurred to me to go there.

In fact, I was at that stage when the idea of a big store rather bored me. I was being educated to succeed my father, but I couldn't see it. My histories had never shown me the name of a merchant among the great men. To me they had no imagination, no vision. Right then the only question in my mind was whether I should be a second Michelangelo or run a big army like Napoleon. My roommate and I had gone over this matter most thoroughly.

I firmly believe the search for those collars changed my viewpoint on life.

An Adventure in Fifth Avenue

I HAD never paid more than twenty-five cents for a collar in my life—usually a quarter for two. I forgot to ask my Beau Brummell adviser about that. The price at our noisy men's outfitting store at college was a quarter, and to my mind that was regulation.

Before entering this Fifth Avenue store we stopped to look in the show window. Strangely enough, there wasn't a collar in it. The floor of the window was carpeted in loosely gathered purple plush. In the center an artistic little stand served for draping the material of a shirt not yet made up. A pair of gold cuff links lay on the plush floor

and a crooked-handle cane rested carelesslike against the shirting. That was all. There were no prices, no display, no bargains—no nothing!

Our enthusiasm suffered a little, but the Beau Brummell had said this was the place, and we went in. I noticed a gold monogram on the glass of the door, and for some reason I can't explain I opened it softly. Inside we stepped on a thick olive-green carpet—not a sound. Having expected a jolly-looking lot of fellows like we were accustomed to at our college haberdashery, Jim and I were quite subdued.

Looking up from the soft floor covering I was surprised to find an elderly gentleman in a frock coat and patent-leather buttoned shoes facing me. He smiled cordially and bowed exactly as the Duke of Marlborough did when he visited our college once.

"Yes, sir?" he said inquiringly. The tone was soft and modulated.

I looked to Jim for suggestion, but all he could think of was "Good morning, sir."

"We'd like some soft collars," I finally imparted to this dignified gentleman in a voice so subdued as to sound like a stage whisper. That's just the way I felt too.

"Surely," he whispered back at me as he turned. "This way, please."

Silently he led us to a bevel-edged glass show case, also lined with plush, and decorated with three neckties holding stick pins. By this time I was so nervous I wanted to light a cigarette, but I dared not. It would be profaning such a place.

As politely as possible I informed the gentleman that our friend had bought his collars there and had recommended it to us. I also explained that my neck was short and thick.

"I have observed that," he said. "For that reason I have selected a collar of this design for you."

He showed us the collar, explaining softly that it was made of an excellent Irish linen. I bowed.

"I will take a half dozen," I managed to say.

They were wrapped in a parcel as if by magic and handed to me by the gentleman as we strolled to the door. I indicated in apologetic language that we were in no further need of outfitting at the moment.

"Oh, by the way," I asked gently but anxiously now, "how much?" The man's appearance up to that time had forbidden a discussion of that nature.

"Seven-twenty," he said as if he had sort of lowered himself to mention it. These collars were one dollar and twenty cents each! I glanced at Jim for moral support, but he was thoroughly tamed.

The Mercantile Imagination

"ALL right, sir," I murmured, and handed the old man my last ten-dollar bill—my spending allowance was very limited in those days. We went out, closing the door softly behind us.

"Gee whiz!" Jim blurted out in real college tone, once we were in the free democratic air. "I'll say those birds take you! Seven dollars and twenty cents for six collars!"

"But they are the class," I argued defensively, nursing my package of collars as if they had been jewels. "No use in being a piker, Jim."

"Yes," he said, "they've soaked you and made you like it. Boy, that's old Art himself. Say, I told you once that merchants didn't figure in history because they didn't have imagination, didn't I?"

I nodded, still thrilled with my plunge.

"Well," he said, "it don't go! Do you think old Shannick up at college could have got away with that—that price for collars?"

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The Nature Lovers

JASON AND THE FLEECE

By GORDON ARTHUR SMITH

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARK FAY



Mary on Her Black Mare Was Now Leading Mammoth the, While Jason Rode Slightly Behind

VIII

POWELL and Upsher did not return from their inspection until midday dinner, and even then they requested permission to continue the job during the afternoon.

"We needn't detain Mr. Tripler, though," pointed out Powell. "He has been very kind, and we know the lay of the land pretty well by now. We'll just grub around by ourselves, if you don't mind."

"Of course," assented Jason—"just as you say."

"What do you think of the mules?" asked Mary.

"Mules? Oh, yes, the mules! Well," said Mr. Powell with a frank, confidential smile, "to tell the truth, I'm not much of a judge of mules. But I guess they're all right—fine, I guess. I'm like Upsher, here—I'm fond of sheep. We've just about made up our minds to raise sheep instead."

"Well," observed Tripler, "don't count 'em until they're hatched. You're likely to lose money, no matter what you do."

Mr. Upsher set down his soup spoon carefully and raised his keen little eyes.

"How much, may I ask without offense—how much do you figure you lose per year, Mr. Gray?"

"Oh, come now," said Powell quickly, "that's not quite a fair question!"

"Of course it's a fair question," asserted Jason. "How much did we lose last year, Mr. Tripler? I wasn't here myself, and I don't recall the figures."

Tripler hesitated.

"Out with it!" urged Jason. "Tell 'em the worst."

"Well," said the agent, "when all expenses were paid we showed a deficit of about two thousand dollars. But we had bad luck last year. Colic—that's the thing to fear with mules. We lost a lot of 'em."

"Quite so—exactly—of course," agreed Mr. Powell. "Hard luck comes over so often, even with the ablest management. But we won't let that bad showing influence us if we decide to make an offer, will we, Upsher?"

"It won't influence me in the least," said Upsher quietly as he resumed his attack on the soup. "I'm here for my health."

"Have some more soup then," urged Mary.

During the rest of the meal Powell regaled them with anecdotes unconnected with the business in hand. He was actually amusing after the fashion of a man who has traveled much in Pullman smokers. His manner was carefully calculated to give the impression that he was a hearty, friendly soul—a sort of overgrown boy, lacking reserve and filled with a boy's trust in human nature. He himself was the butt of many of his own stories. As he expressed it, he was used to being made a goat of.

Mr. Upsher said little, but applied himself diligently to the meal, with an appetite that did credit to Montana air.

When they had finished Powell lit a big cigar and he and Mr. Upsher once more started forth to inspect, Mr. Tripler accompanying them as far as the large paddock, where he had business to attend to.

"Of course it's oil," said Mary when they had gone.

"For me," replied Jason, "it's mules—mules first, at any rate. We'll give the mules a fair chance, and if it don't work out—why, then we can consider the oil proposition."

"What do you call a fair chance?" she asked.

He frowned and passed a hand reflectively across his smooth chin.

"Well," he said at length, "how about two years?"

Two years! That was the period during which he had asked Vivienne to wait for him to succeed. But had he the right, with success in his grasp, to defer it even that long? Probably he could sell out that afternoon for a tidy profit—a sum large enough to enable him to return to New York and marry. And the only thing that held him back was a reluctance to turn Tripler and Tripler's daughter adrift without a job. But was it that? As he had pointed out, Tripler would readily find another job under old Caleb Gray. So it couldn't be that entirely. Well, perhaps it was

just a streak of obstinacy in his make-up—a streak inherited from his father—or perhaps it was that he wanted to show Mary just how much ability he really had, or perhaps it was that he looked forward to working side by side with her—coworkers, a perfectly platonic relationship to which Vivienne could not object.

"Yes," he said firmly, "we'll give the mules two years. Then if we don't make a go of it we'll consider the oil proposition. But we've got to get together and prove ourselves little geniuses with the mules. Other people make money out of them—why can't we? Just what's our trouble?"

"I know the trouble," she said slowly.

"Well?"

"The trouble is we don't breed the highest quality mule."

"We don't, eh? Well, why don't we?"

"Because there's not enough capital behind us. We can't afford the best jacks and the best brood mares. The people that make money out of mules breed them from pedigree jacks—and pedigree jacks cost money. It's like eggs. There's no use trying to sell just fairly good eggs—you have to have very good ones."

"That sounds reasonable enough, but you discourage me at the very start. You say we need a better jack and that a better jack costs money. Now I'm full of hope, ambition, faith, youth and strength, but there's one thing I haven't got and can't get, and that's money. You'll have to think up something else, I'm afraid."

"Oh," she said carelessly, "I've already considered that. I know you haven't any money. But I have—that is, I have a little. Enough, maybe."

"Enough?" he repeated. "Well, I'm glad to hear it, Mary—very glad to hear it. If you'd leave it lying around loose in cash I might steal it from you and buy the most stunning jack in the world, and a bunch of brood mares."

(Continued on Page 24)

MADE BY THE MAKERS OF CAMPBELL'S SOUPS



Ready almost instantly!

Campbell's Beans are a splendid summer-time dish—already cooked, delicious either hot or cold, and such hearty, substantial food that the hungrier you are, the more they satisfy you. They are richly nutritious, slow-cooked and digestible—wholesome as they are delightful. Their famous tomato sauce gives them a tastiness that makes you want Campbell's every time.

12 cents a can

Except in Rocky Mountain States and in Canada

Campbell's BEANS

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

(Continued from Page 22)

"Not at all," she said. "I'm not going to leave it lying around loose. I'm going to invest it."

"Too bad," said he.

"I'm going to invest it in the Gray Forks Ranch, and I'm going to take a fat share of the profits too."

Jason whistled softly. He said nothing, but regarded her with a comical expression of bewilderment. She flushed under his close scrutiny, and tossed up her head with a defiant gesture.

"Well, why not?" she exclaimed.

"Are you serious?" he countered.

"Of course I am! It's a simple business proposition."

"H'm!" said he. "Maybe not so simple. Suppose you put in your money and the ranch still shows us a loss. What then?"

"Then it's our own fault. Suppose I put my money into an oil company and there wasn't any oil. That would be even more foolish, wouldn't it?"

"Yes. But the wise place to put a young lady's money is in government bonds or the savings bank. That's where yours ought to be."

"That's where it is," she said, "and it's just rotting away. I'd rather put it into the ranch, where my personal efforts will have some effect. Oh, I haven't much money, but there's enough to buy a good jack and some first-class brood mares—a little over eight thousand dollars."

"We'll speak to your father about it first," said Jason.

"He has nothing to do with it. It's my money, I tell you. I do just what I want with it."

"And you want to invest it in Gray Forks?"

"Yes."

"What percentage of the profits would you expect?"

"Ten per cent," she answered promptly—"ten per cent of the net profits, and no liability if we show a loss."

He considered this a moment in silence.

"That's not enough," he observed at length. "We'll call it twenty per cent of the profits."

"We'll do nothing of the sort."

They argued the point for a while, she insisting that her eight thousand dollars was an infinitesimal contribution alongside of the value of the ranch as it stood, and he pointing out that the ranch as it stood was a liability rather than an asset. They finally agreed to refer it to Mr. Tripler for arbitration, and then, very seriously, they shook hands on the bargain.

Shortly after, Mr. Powell and Mr. Upsher returned from their inspection tour. Mr. Powell was in excellent spirits.

"Well, sir," he said to Jason, "I guess we're about ready to talk business now. Mr. Upsher and I have seen all there is to see, and frankly we like what we've seen. That's a bad way for me to put the case if I expect to drive a good bargain, but that's the way I'm made. When I like a thing I can't help saying so. How much, Mr. Gray, will you take for the property?"

Jason smiled back at him blandly.

"I'm afraid," said he, "that I'll take just a little more than you are willing to give, Mr. Powell."

Mr. Powell once more slapped his thigh.

"Well, well," he said, "that may be true and it may not be true. Mr. Upsher, how much are you willing to give?"

Mr. Upsher caressed his chin attentively before he answered, "We're willing to give just a little less than Mr. Gray would like to get."

"I don't doubt that," said Jason cheerfully. "My price is practically prohibitive. You see, I happen to know that there is oil on this land."

"Oil!" cried Mr. Powell, with what was either unfeigned or remarkably well simulated surprise.

"Oil?" repeated Mr. Upsher. "Are you sure?"

"Oh, no!" answered Jason. "Not sure at all. One never is until it spouts."

"Well!" said Powell, and again, "Well! That alters everything, of course. We've been wasting time, I'm afraid, Upsher, trying to buy a ranch that's really an oil field. You're to be congratulated, Mr. Gray; but," he added aggrievedly, "I do think you might have warned us."

"We thought you'd be sure to notice the symptoms yourselves," put in Mary innocently.

Mr. Upsher cleared his throat and uncrossed his thin legs. Then he said: "I don't want to seem discouraging, but I'm something of an expert on oil land, and I must admit that I failed to see anything to lead me to believe you have oil, Mr. Gray. However, you doubtless know best. Come, Powell, we'd better start along back."

"There's oil in the county," declared Mary defiantly—"only twenty miles away. Didn't you know that, Mr. Upsher?"

"I had heard—vaguely—rumors. But I'm not here on business, so I didn't take much notice. I'm here for rest, and to buy a place I can find rest in. Come along, Powell."

"Well, I suppose we might just as well," agreed Powell, rising reluctantly. "Any offer we'd care to make you would, of course, refuse, Mr. Gray. I can readily understand that. So we'll bid you good-by—and the best of luck."

He flashed his gold teeth at them, shook hands heartily, and he and Upsher climbed into their automobile and drove away.

"Well," said Jason, "what do you think now? Still think they were after oil?"

"Of course," said Mary. "They'll look around now until they find someone who doesn't know there's oil on his land. Then they'll snap it up cheap."

"But you must admit that I don't know there's oil on my land. We may have jumped at the conclusion too quickly."

"Not likely," she protested. "Anyhow, we're going to raise mules, aren't we?"

"You bet your life we're going to raise mules, Mary! Big fat mules, too, that we'll sell at over two hundred apiece. Big, fat, glossy mules that'll make Gray Forks famous and us rich."

Mary nodded her head gravely.

"I know just the jack we can get," she said. "He's a descendant of Big Ike, one of the most famous sires the country ever had. He's for sale—in the next county. We can ride over and look at him some day. He's won all sorts of prizes already, and his get sell for enormous prices. Mammoth Ike, they call him."

"Fine!" cried Jason. "Mary and Jason and Mammoth Ike, the unbeatable trio! The maid, the man and the jackass!"

IX

ABOUT a week after the world-shaking events chronicled in the preceding chapter Vivienne sat in her pink apartment reading a letter from Jason.

"My sweet little woman," he wrote, for unconsciously perhaps he had adopted some of her unctuousness of style—"my sweet little woman, I am launched now in a great adventure which will either make or break our future. I have decided to risk everything on—well, I won't tell you yet; I'll keep it as a surprise. At the end of a year or so I'll know the worst or the best, but I'm confident that it will be the best. If things turn out as I've reason to believe they will, I'll come back to New York and to you with

(Continued on Page 51)



"Gray? What Gray?" "Young Jason Gray—Young Fellow From New York Out There Raising Mules"

Who buys the Most high-grade Havana?

*Smokers of Robt. Burns
will be interested*

SMOKERS of fragrant Robt. Burns enjoy more Havana tobacco every year than the smokers of any other cigar made in America.

For Robt. Burns has a full Havana filler—a filler carefully chosen from the best offerings of the famous Vuelta Arriba section of Cuba.

The cream of Vuelta Arriba filler tobacco—used in Robt. Burns—has as high an average cost as any leaf grown on Cuban soil. . .

"But Robt. Burns is mild," you say.

Yes, Robt. Burns is mild—a satisfying mildness—not tame or insipid. The selected Havana filler is toned down by a special and individual method of curing.

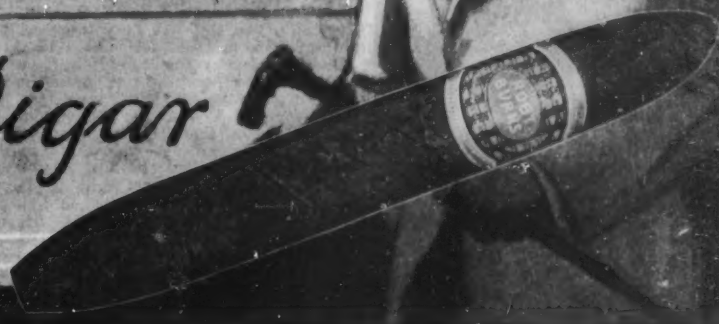
There are at least 50,000 more smokers who will thank us for persuading them to try Robt. Burns. Perhaps you are one of them.

General Cigar Co., Inc.
NATIONAL BRANDS
NEW YORK CITY

PERFECTOS: 2 for 25c INVINCIBLES: 15c straight

The cigar featured below is
ROBT. BURNS Perfecto (actual size)
2 for 25c. Box of 50: \$6.00

Robt. Burns Cigar



Jim Henry's Column

Camp Comfort

I wish everyone could enjoy his introduction to Mennen Shaving Cream on his vacation—preferably at a camp.

His soul is attuned to the things which make life happy.

He gets up when he feels like it and his mind doesn't instantly snap into high gear on all the worries and irritations of working days. A bucket of water yanked out of the pond—a flat rock to sit on where he can watch the morning clouds drift over the tree tops, mirrored brokenly in the breeze swept water—

And then he opens his new tube of Mennen's and reads the directions about building up the lather with three minutes of brisk brushing—no finger rubbing.

Why not? Three minutes or ten—it's all the same to him—no train to catch—no seven minute breakfast to gulp.

It startles him a little to find that cold water makes a perfect lather—and also what an enormous amount of water he is able to pack into the lather.

But the crowning moment—the solemn moment of almost unearthly content—is when the razor starts clearing the underbrush just east of his ear.

He looks at the razor—puzzled—to see if the blade is there—for there was no sensation of cutting—rather it was a gentle caress.

Then he gets to the wiry thicket just below the corners of his mouth—that he used to have to yank up by the roots—nothing there.

The second time over is so joyous he almost wants to play the course a third time just for fun.

and afterwards—
Mennen
Jaleum
for Men
it doesn't
show

And afterwards—his face feels so benevolent, so cold creamy—is it any wonder he then and there wonders that whatever other changes come into his life his shaving habits are fixed—Mennen's forever.

My 15 cent demonstrator tube will just about last a vacation.

Jim Henry
(Mennen Salesman)

THE MENNEN COMPANY
NEWARK, N.J. U.S.A.



THE TEMPLE OF LUCK

(Continued from Page 19)

it had for many a day, the hollow spaces in the long pier were filled with the echoes that lifted from an intermittent chorus which proclaimed that:

*I kin load a steamboat, load it full wid freight;
I kin load a steamboat when it's leavin' late.
Dat's de reason Ise as happy as a bee;
I don't bother work an' work don't bother me.*

Throughout the late hours of the afternoon the foreman watched the Wildcat. "Hustlin' nigger. Make him a straw boss to-morrow if this keeps up."

IV

HONEYTONE realized that rank imposes commensurate obligation before his Temple-of-Luck campaign had lived a week. Too much rank imposed too much obligation, and so the Swamic church and the faith-healing and the palm-reading Magi and several other verbal branches of his project were discarded before the several deppity soopreem lodge leaders got too soopreem to handle. The backbone of his income was at once the temple fund, and this important business demanded and received all his energy except that required by his elaborate pictures of the New World African colony in Brazil.

The temple fund, paying all investors 100 per cent a week, was popular from the start. On the first dividend day Honeytone made the grade without difficulty, and all subscriptions were repaid, together with a bonus of a like amount. Immediately after the ceremony of repayment was completed the backwash of investment began to roll in, and by the evening the promoter counted more than a thousand dollars in his hip-pocket treasury. On the next day a new group of subscribers to whom the news had been retailed milled about the doors of the temporary temple for a chance to register and donate their investments. Honeytone, operating in a rented house, herded the investors into a room where his voice could pulverize the sediment of reluctance which remained in his hearers' minds, leaving no dregs of doubt that might cloud the nectar of hope.

He donned a serious-looking coat, long and black, and swept a broad yellow sash across his chest. On his head rested a Manchu-mandarin cap purchased in Chinatown and revised with ornament suitable for the insignia of the soopreemest. About his waist was the equator part of a Sam Browne belt, and from it dangled a Civil War cavalry saber whose scabbard had suffered two coats of gilt paint, not quite dry. He retained his ordinary street shoes. Life was a battle and you never could tell when the bugles of fate might blow recall. Street shoes came in handy when there was any heavy running to be done. In his uniform he addressed the herded investors:

"Brethrin, de books is closed fo' de present week. All whut paid yistiddy gits dey money back 'long wid de same amount fo' int'res next Sat'd'y. Dem whut pays de 'scriptions now gits de 'vestment an' de hund'ed per cent int'res de Sat'd'y afteh nex'. De books is now open, de gol'-seal c'tificates is ready. Fawm in line an' git yo' money ready. Ten dollahs, brotheh. Heah's yo' papeh. Now you is a deppity soopreem leadeh, 'titled to de red sash. Nex' Sat'd'y us 'lects de ten soopreem gov'nors fo' de leadin' districts in de New Worl' African colony at Barsil. Boat leaves wid de 'ficials an' de p'visions nex' month. 'Lecture is by de lucky numbehs. Soopreem 'ficials gits a house an' ten thousand milrose—dat's Barsil dollahs—ev'ry month to travel round' wid an' see is de distric' doin' O. K. Fifteen dollahs—dat 'tities you to de yaller sash of trust. Chances is you sho' will be a soopreem gov'nor. Nex' brotheh."

On the Saturday following Honeytone managed to postpone the election of the soopreem governors for the ten districts of the colony and to side-step the various vague promises that he had sown so lavishly throughout the preceding two weeks, but in the department of finance there was no evasion short of flight, and in the white light that forever bent about him escape for the moment was impossible. He sensed the growing pyramid of final retort and began to formulate plans whereby the mantle of responsibility might be transferred to other aspiring shoulders.

The cumulative financial problem was a simple matter of geometrical progression

at the far end of which lay a solution consisting of several quarts of blood. He faced a wire-edged razor seeking a gilt-edged dodge, and so far his brain had failed to formulate a safe way out. His attempts at transferring the long end of the load to the strutting deppity who hung around the Temple of Luck met with less success.

"Long as you stays soopreem enough to wrassle wid de financial department, us leaves you run it. You is soopreem now. Stay dat way."

Later on Brother Livingstone approached Honeytone and warned the leader to stay soopreem or pay the charges on one life-size mistake.

"Confidential like, Honeytone, I tells you stay soopreem o' else tell de grave committee de fac's fo' yo' tombstone."

The person of the soopreem leader became the object of watchful care on the part of three shifts of deppity gardeens. Day and night there were two or three watchful waiters on the job.

The fourth pay day was approaching, and with it an obligation to pay out more than four thousand dollars. Receipts were falling off. On Wednesday night Honeytone's bankroll audited less than three thousand dollars. He tried to split the pot with the deppity gardeens in return for liberty. In this he failed.

On Thursday night, as near as he could see, all the gates were closed. He was on a one-way road.

*All I does is follow mah feet,
'Ceptin' when de boss says stop an' eat.
Follow mah feet de whole day through;
Follow mah feet till I burns a shoe,
Shovin' a truckload o' pork an' beans,
Loadin' de boat fo' New O'leans.*

BACK of his truck on the dock the Wildcat set the pace for his fellows. The man in front of him found the Wildcat forever at his heels. The man following had a hard time keeping up. Now and then the Wildcat's feet abandoned the steady trot for a gait which included considerable prancing, embellished with a new series of fancy steps, limited only by the inertia of the freight truck with which the stepper's ambition was retarded.

*On de downhill drag let yo' hind legs slide;
Mawmin', Mistah Debbil, git abo'd an' ride.
Git behin' me, Satan, on de uphill road,
Ise a one-horse sinner wid a two-horse load.*

Late in the afternoon the Wildcat's tactics had converted a group of admirers who had discovered in the prosaic business of rustling freight a first-class chance to make a laughing game of it. Meanwhile they were moving record tonnage. At evening the pier foreman sent for the Wildcat.

"To-morrow morning you take a gang down to Section Seventeen and start mo'ing flour into the West King. There'll be five a day extra in it. That'll buy grub for the goat."

"Cap'n, yessuh. You means Ise fo' man?"

"That's what I mean. Keep your niggers rustlin'."

"Yass, suh! Sho' will!" The Wildcat jerked at Lily's string halter. "Goat, say youse 'bliged to de cap'n. Stan' roun' theh fo' I shows you whose de boss wid a club!"

"Bla-a-a!" returned Lily.

The pier foreman smiled.

"You might round up some more men if you can find 'em," he continued. "We can use a lot more. I'll give you twenty dollahs a man for all you can get. Tell 'em ten a day with grub, and quarters furnished here on the dock."

"Cap'n, you means I gits twenty dollahs fo' ev'ry stevedo' nigger whut I 'cumulates'?"

"That's it."

"How much is a hund'ed niggers, suh?"

"Two thousand dollahs."

"Cap'n, you gits 'em to-morr'. Us kin rule dat many single-handed, me 'suadin' an' Lily rammin'. Mebbe two hund'ed. Come on heah, goat! Le's go!"

The Wildcat left the pier with visions of a military formation of a million men marching steadily toward a place where they were worth twenty dollahs apiece to him. In his dream of being king of all labor agents he failed to include the difficulties with which his pathway was beset. The stevedore strike, gaining strength each

day, now included a floating committee whose duty it was to discourage the enlistment of new labor.

The Wildcat borrowed a dollar and ate supper at the lunch counter where he had met Trombone, hoping that he might again encounter that individual. Ranged about him were ten or fifteen hearty eaters, and to this group, at the termination of his own meal, he addressed his invitation to participate in the business of loading steamships with outbound freight.

"Ten dollahs a day, boy, comf'table place fo' sleepin' an' all de grub you kin eat."

His oration fell on barren ground. He left the lunch counter without having gained a single recruit.

"C'm on heah, Lily. Dese city niggers sho' is triffin'. Whut us needs is fiel' han's o' else some heavy 'suader like a hoe handle. Us aims to sleep somehow. Mebbe to-morr' Lady Luck boons me wid men whut craves a job wid rations an' ten dollahs a day."

For a while the next morning the work of loading the West King with flour lagged a little under the direction of the new foreman. At eleven o'clock, noting the epidemic of reluctance to move out of a slow drag which had afflicted his gang, the Wildcat climbed to the top of a tier of flour barrels. He took out his knife and whittled through the hoops of a barrel. He resumed his place on the pier.

"Break down dat top line. Git movin'! Haul out 'at bottom bar'! Stan' back when dey comes!"

They came. An avalanche of rolling barrels rolled wildly across the deck of the pier. The top one on which the hoops were cut landed with a smash in the center of an explosive spray of flour. The atmosphere was suddenly white dust. Black complexions presently became gray. Perspiring freight jugglers began to laugh at their fellows. In three minutes the roof of the pier was echoing back the volleys of high-pitched laughter which lifted from below. Until noon, and then through the long afternoon, all that the Wildcat's men did was to laugh their heads off at the slightest provocation and move more freight than the ship's cargo booms could handle.

*Ah likes biscuits an' ah likes bread,
Doan' like 'em plastered on mah head;
Craves to have 'em spread around on mah inside
'Sted of havin' dough a-drippin' off mah hide.*

The pier foreman, passing the Wildcat's crew late in the afternoon, paused to look the deal over.

"Everything all right?"

"Cap'n, yessuh. Dey's good boys. 'Clined to mope some at fust, but dey got laughin' some way. Since den dey's been movin' 'long."

Without knowing it, the Wildcat had mixed the essence of all the theories of efficiency into one barrel of flour. The results of the administered dose were showing on the tally boards in the freight office at the end of the long pier. The transportation superintendent sent for the pier foreman.

"Jim, who is handling the flour into the West King?"

"Young nigger called Wildcat—right name is Marsden. Got him yesterday."

"Keep him forever. The Empire docks to-morrow for a mixed cargo for New Orleans. Sixteen thousand tons. Let this Wildcat boy handle all of it—as long as he lasts."

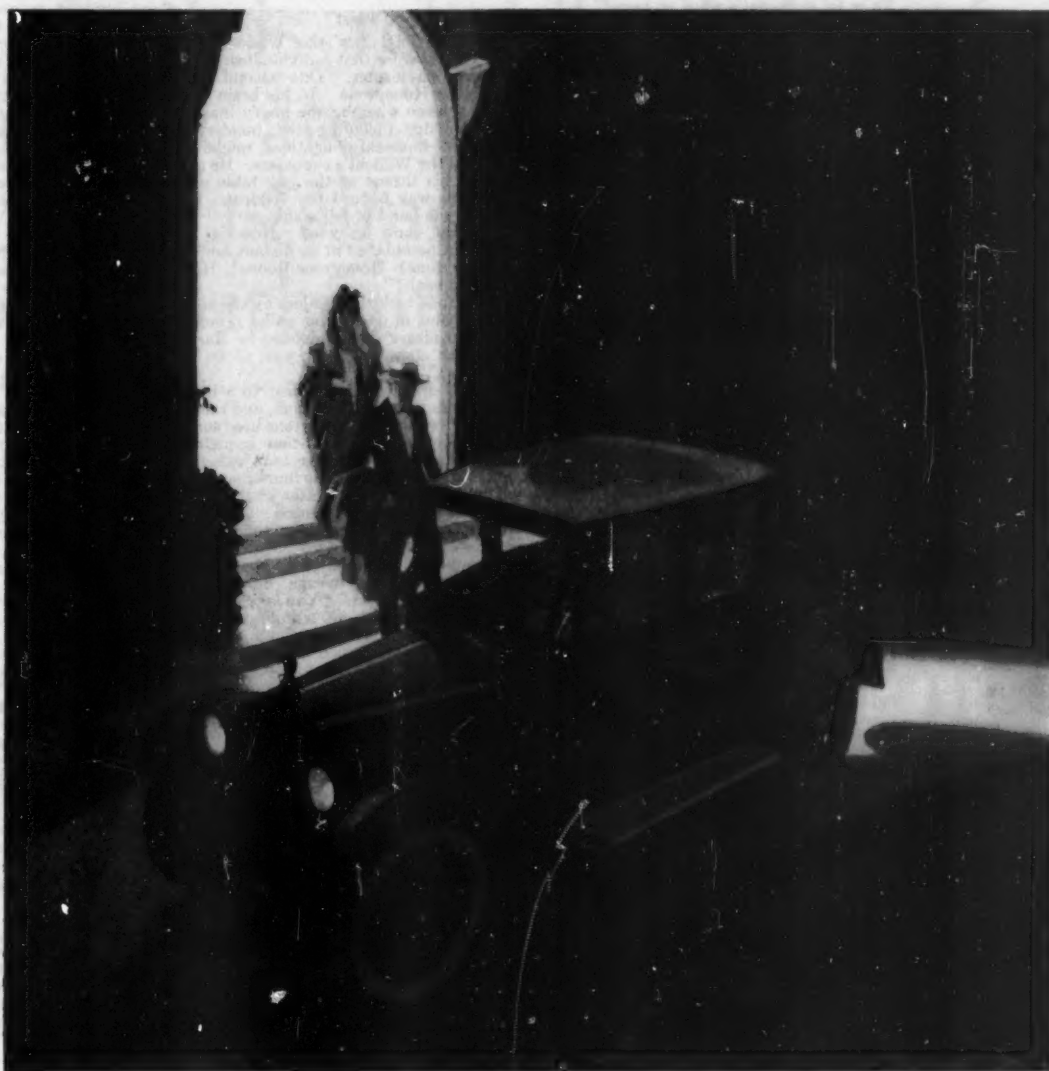
VI

ON FRIDAY morning Honeytone groaned himself awake, realizing when his eyes were open that less than thirty-six hours lay between his fragile form and blood-tinted trouble. It seemed to him that his self-appointed guardians clung closer with the passage of the hours as if they suspected their soopreem treasurer of perfecting a plot which might include his exit. The obligations of the moment were four thousand dollahs, and in Honeytone's bulging pocket but three-quarters of that amount awaited the pay hour which would come with Saturday.

Saturday dawned, and with it the sprout of an idea had shown through the grave-yard ground of Honeytone's dejection. In mournful tones, hardly hoping that success

(Continued on Page 28)

PACKARD



THIS IS THE PACKARD SINGLE-SIX COUPE

THE HOME that is served by the Packard Car continually enjoys the utmost in agreeable automobile travel. No other vehicle affords quite such trustworthiness in action, quite such comfort under all conditions, quite such justification for pride. These things are true alike of the Twin-Six and of the Single-Six Packard. Each is the embodiment of the original Packard purpose never to release any product that does not dignify the Packard name.

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Ask the man who owns one



Hawaiian Crushed or Grated Pineapple

Serve It Like Apple Sauce

One of the most tempting desserts you can serve is chilled Hawaiian Crushed or Grated Pineapple just as it comes from the container.

This golden, luscious fruit is real sun-ripened Hawaiian Pineapple, picked in its prime and sealed safe in its containers that same day.

For making pies, cakes, tarts, salads, puddings, sherbets and desserts, Hawaiian Crushed or Grated Pineapple is most convenient to use.

Your grocer has it in assorted sizes to suit your needs. Order six or a dozen tins and you will have a supply for daily use and all emergencies.

ASSOCIATION OF
HAWAIIAN PINEAPPLE PACKERS
58 E. Washington St., Chicago

Try this recipe and send for our booklet containing many good hints for serving this delicious fruit

Sponge Pineapple Pudding—Put stale sponge cake in a pint mold or bowl, pouring over it sufficient thick pineapple juice to moisten; set in a cool place until serving time, invert on a dish, tapping bowl hard enough to allow cake to slip out unbroken. Arrange Crushed or Grated Hawaiian Pineapple around it.



HAWAIIAN
CRUSHED OR GRATED
PINEAPPLE

(Continued from Page 26)

would attend his latest scheme, he announced it to his guardian deppity:

"Brethren, yo' leadeh's efforts has been rewarded like de oil in de widow's cruse. F'm now on us pays back de original 'scription wid a hund'ed per cent int'res', an'—harken unto dese words—oveh and above de 'riginal an de int'res' a bonus equal to de 'vestment! Doan ask what de Lawd means when de blessin' showers down. Git in de rain an' git wet wid cash. Th'ee fo' one—dat's whut us pays!"

At evening, before he took his place at the pay table, he repeated the announcement. The rooms of the temple were crowded and the flock was silent, hanging with acute interest on the soopreemest's words. Honeytone held up his hand. He bowed right and left, and the glittering tinsel on the mandarin cap reflected the color of minted gold from the yellow lights. He held aloft the hilt of the gilded sword that swung from his yellow belt. He sheathed his sword and parked his nervous left hand in the folds of the yellow sash that draped across his chest.

"Brethren of de temple, sow an' reap. As you sows, you likewise reaps. De goddess of gold an' de lady's husband, Ol' Man Midas, has smiled agin upon ou' humble efforts. To-night Ah makes a mementous announcement befo' Ah returns wid int'res' de 'vestments you made las' week. Up to now de financial repayments has been two fo' one. F'm now on us pays twice dat much!"

He paused to let his words sink in. "Fo' ev'ry dollar you 'vats you gits de dollar back, anoth'eh 'dollar fo' int'res', an' as a special bonus, anoth'eh dollar whut makes de th'ee fo' one. Dis special 'vestment deapartment is open now an' will be run wid de lef' han' whilst de right, not knowin' whut de lef' han' does, pays out yo' las' week's cash. Fawm in line. Ah pays an' receives at de same table. Who is de fust brotheh? Yass, indeed! Heah's yo' money—an' you says you craves to 'vest it in de th'ee-fo'-one fund. Praise de Lawd! De los' sheep sees de light!"

Some there were who failed to see the light, but by strenuous persuasion Honeytone managed to reclaim enough of his payments to piece out the missing thousand.

Over and above the success he enjoyed in keeping his epidermis free from the parked razors of revenge, he pouched a few hundred dollars surplus before the hour of payment ceased. With it, including the borrowed and juggled thousand, he had incurred an obligation to repay another staggering sum on the following Saturday night.

Thankful for his escape from the crisis of the moment, and a little bit shaken by the acute peril which had confronted him, he sat heavily at the pay table and sagged down in his soopreem robes. He ran his eye over the pay list, and for the first time he noticed an unpaid investor—"Pike Canfield, \$100.00."

A knock sounded at the outer door. The outer guard clattered in.

"Brotheh Canfield, an' a strange brotheh who desires to be led straight."

"Tell Brotheh Canfield to enteh unto de soopreem presence," Honeytone returned, according to the ritual. Then, under his breath, "Damn 'at Trombone nigger! How come he so prompt at de las' minute?"

VII

A LITTLE late at the Sutter Street lunch counter by reason of his added responsibilities at the dock, the Wildcat had found his friend Trombone impatiently awaiting him.

"Wilecat, does us miss de meetin' Ah loses a hund'ed dollahs. Grab yo' vittles an' eat on de run."

"Whut time is you due at de temple?"

"De meetin' done stahted a houh back. 'Less us gits dah in fifteen minnits de do's closed."

"Trombone, us has plenty ob time. Ah 'sorbs mah nutriment in five minnits. 'At leaves ten fo' de trip. Ain't et me nothin' all day, 'ceptin' breakfus an' some san'-wiches at noontime. Sho' been busy loadin' de ol' Empire fo' N'Orleans. Dey made me de gang boss. Ise got mo' niggers dan ol' cunnel had in de Fust Service Battalion. Sho' is busy. Niggers crave to mope. Ah uncraves 'em like de lootenant used to—gits 'em all laffin so ha'd dey forgits de wuk. Fo' long dey ain't no mo' wuk an' eve'y-body feels noble. Dat's all de talk. Heah's mah ham sizzlin' in de gravy. Stan' up, Lily, eat dese lettuce greens."

The Wildcat did an hour's eating in three minutes.

"Whuf! Ol' rations sho' tastes noble. Whah at's yo' soopreem ol' leadeh whut pays out de money? Ah craves to 'vest some mahse'f. To-night I has money. Las' week me an' Lily was bust. Le's go!"

Ten minutes later Trombone and the Wildcat, leading Lily, were at the outer door of the Temple of Luck. There followed the ritual business of three knocks and the ceremony of admittance.

VIII

HONEYTONE saw the Wildcat one second before that individual saw the soopreem paymaster. One second was enough for Honeytone. In his brain was born a scheme whereby the heavy mantle of leadership, including the ponderous pyramid of financial obligations, might be shifted to the Wildcat's shoulders. He got up from his throne at the pay table and plowed his way toward the Wildcat. He held out the hand of fellowship.

"Wilecat, how is you? How is de wushupful potentate f'm de distant lan'?"

"Honeytone! Honeytone Boone! How come you heah?"

Honeytone took the Wildcat by the arm. "Brothehs, in de humble yaller raiment of a plain nigger de long-looked-fo' Barzil leadeh has come to 'scort you all to de promis' lan'."

He half dragged the Wildcat to a little room opening off the larger hall, and thereafter for five minutes Honeytone used some private eloquence on his old-time acquaintance. The soopreem leader took pains to omit the detail covering the four-thousand-dollar obligation that went with the job. Finally the Wildcat weakened.

"Sho' sounds noble, Honeytone. Tell me de res'."

"You is de head boss of de New Worl' Af'ican colony, an' weahs de robes," Honeytone concluded. "You is tempo'ary soopreem leadeh ol' de temple whilst I 'tends to some private business a sho't ways out o' town. When de Barzil colony is runnin' you gits de job of soopreem king. All you does now is keep yo' mouth shut an' look soopreem. Dis steamboat in you says you is 'gaged in comes in handy. You tells de membehs at de propheet time dat you is loadin' de boat fo' de Barzil colony."

Honeytone left his convert and prepared the way for the transition with the assembled audience. Halfway through his discourse he was interrupted by Trombone, who craved to get his hundred dollars before the flight of Honeytone's imagination lifted the soopreem one above paltry things like financial obligations. Honeytone paid him with three quick movements—a dig for the roll, an outstretching of a handful of cash and the grip of eternal brotherhood.

"At's dat! Dah you ia!"

Meanwhile the Wildcat's languid brain had stumbled over an idea as big as a church:

"Ah leads de brethren to de dock an' gits twenty dollahs fo' ev'ry man."

When Honeytone returned the Wildcat eagerly succumbed to the rôle imposed on him.

"Sho' kin, Honeytone. Sho' glad to be tempo'ary soopreem leadeh. Ah learns dese brethren de steamboat bizness. Sho' glad to show 'em all Ah knows an' git 'em stahted."

"Wait heah 'till Ah 'suades 'em to let you handle everything." Honeytone left the Wildcat alone for the second time and made a further announcement to the brethren.

"De wo'shipful tempo'ary soopreem leadeh suggests, wid de high knowledge he has fo' suggestin', dat if he has de treasury department in his han's de payments on 'vestments will increase up to fo' to one. Dat alone shows you whut a big man he is. Nex' week he pays you all yo' 'vestment, int'res' at a hund'ed per cent, a bonus de same amount an' a special dividend equal to one an' all. Ah hereby 'spectfully resigns de robes of office an' names a 'nitiation c'mmittee of twelve brothehs to 'dorn de new soopreem tempo'ary leadeh wid de raiment of his rank."

Honeytone returned to the Wildcat.

"Youse been 'lected unan'mous. De 'nitiation cer'monies is ready. You gits de gran' degree right away. Heah's de treasury. Ain't no bills due—yet. Don't owe nuthin'."

Honeytone split his roll, being burdened with the rudiments of the principle of safety first. He shoved the money at the Wildcat and hurried the candidate to the

door before the victim had a chance to count the cash.

There followed an impromptu initiation ceremony, interrupted but once by Lily's bleating, after which the Wildcat realized that he was the head of something that he knew mighty little about. He looked around for Honeytone, seeking the moral support that might derive from the presence of his old friend and enemy. Honeytone had explained himself loose from his guards. Honeytone was gone. The Wildcat fumbled around with some oversized words, and then the real object of his speech came to him.

"Dese niggers means twenty dollahs apiece—on de dock."

He launched into a wild description of the New World African colony. He pictured a life of ease in which each charter member of the colony who believed in heaven would be reluctant to trade heaven for a stevedore career. He added the time phrase which was the essence of the whole affair.

"You meets me heah to-morr' mawnin' at six o'clock. Ah leads you to de boat whah you sees how fas' kin' you git de freight aboard. So as yo' gits de wages yo' labor is worthy of, like de Bible says, I 'ranges dat ev'ry man gits ten dollahs a day an' grub."

Before the light of dawn began to chase the San Francisco fogs up the bay the charter members of the New World African colony began to assemble at the gates of the temple. When the Wildcat appeared at six o'clock he was greeted by more than two hundred worthy brethren, all of whom craved to learn the boat-loading business at ten dollars a day. He marched his gang to the Embarcadero, yelling orders in a manner that made some of the veterans of the A. E. F. homesick.

"Silence in de ranks!" The clamor subsided. "When Ah 'columns you lef', head fo' de big building!"

The big building was the entrance to the pier against which, eating charter money faster than the banks could loan it and hungry for her sixteen thousand tons of mixed freight, lay the Empire.

At half past seven the Wildcat reported to the pier foreman at the office in the end of the long building.

"Cap'n, suh, heah's mor'n two hund'd twenty-dollah niggers. How much does dat come to, suh?"

The pier foreman ran his eye over the crowd without answering. He disappeared into the office, where he spoke quickly to his clerk.

"Cut all the labor grabbers off the pay roll. Call 'em in. Here's more men than I've seen in a year."

Outside there began the brief business of distributing the new supply of much-needed labor. This accomplished, the Wildcat came in for his share of attention.

"We can use another gang like this. Can you get 'em by to-morrow?"

"Cap'n, suh, Ah gits fo' times dis many does you crave 'em. When does Ah git de money?"

Fifteen minutes later the Wildcat received a piece of blue paper.

"Cap'n, suh, Ah kain't read whut de papeh says. Kin you read fo' me, please, suh?"

"That's a check for four thousand and eighty dollars—two hundred and four men at twenty a throw."

"Lawd, Lady Luck, you sho' showered down this time!"

The Wildcat's brain could surround the eighty-dollar part, but the four-thousand end was something not yet real. He stowed the check in his pocket with the fragment of the treasury roll of the Temple of Luck.

On Saturday, unable to restrain his anxiety to see what so much money looked like, he persuaded the pier foreman to send the clerk to the bank to get the check cashed. The cash was handed to the Wildcat. He stowed it away in various pockets of the yaller suit.

"Ol' money sticks out like stole chickens. Neveh did see so much money."

That night, under the stress of prosperity, the Wildcat quit an hour early. He drifted to the Temple of Luck intending to sit easy and smoke a cigar and talk big talk to the evening assembly of brethren. Two or three of Honeytone's former guardians were busy loafing at the temple when the Wildcat arrived. After a period of silence following the salutations appropriate for the soopreem leader a deppity

(Continued on Page 30)

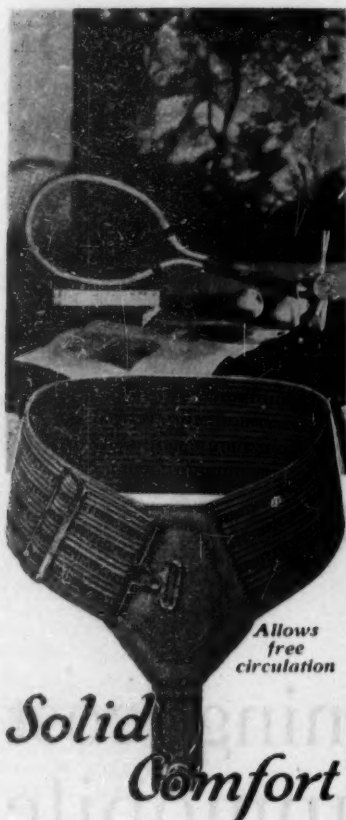
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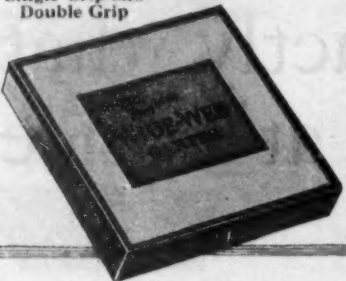
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(Continued from Page 28)

led up to the matter of meeting the financial obligations which fell due that evening.

"Ah figgehs, sooprem, dey's somethin' like fo' thousan' dollahs to be paid out to-night. Sho' is a lot o' money."

The Wildcat was interested.

"Fo' thousan'? Whah at's de money comin' f'm?"

Five anxious brethren sat up. "It was all right for the sooprem leadeh to enjoy himself on whatever subject pleased him as long as there were no personal dollar signs attached to the subject."

"You knows whah it comes f'm. You's jokin', sooprem. Go 'long wid yo' talk! 'Scuse me fo' speakin' so familiah, but de money question sho' is in de fust rank. Specially since you pays fo' to one. De pas' sooprem leadeh strained hisse'f to pay 'thee fo' one."

In the course of the next five minutes the Wildcat's eyes were opened concerning the generous ease with which Honeytone had relinquished what appeared to be a position of prominence second to none for social and political status. He sought to make his escape only to discover the same restraint which had defeated Honeytone's plans of flight.

"Come easy, go easy." The Wildcat surrendered to the clutch of circumstance. He felt the diminishing weight of the four thousand dollars. "Ah kep' it a week. Dat's longeh den Ah evah had such big money befo'. Now Ah has to buy mahself free wid it 'stead of usin' it fo' rations an' sech. Dog-gone! Whah at is Lady Luck?"

The hour for the meeting came. The Wildcat adorned himself with his sooprem robes. He cut a long end from the yaller sash and tied it around the mascot's stomach.

"Heah, goat, dog-gone you, git calm! Stan' still till Ah adorns yo' wid de sooprem bellyband. See kin you make Lady Luck heah you. Dat woman sho' fo'got my name."

"Bl-a-a!"

Festooned with the yellow sash, Lily did the best she could to make Lady Luck respond, but Lady Luck was deaf. Lady Luck was A. W. O. L. Thereafter for an hour the Wildcat sat at the sooprem table, watching his stack of greenbacks melt out before him on four-to-one obligations incurred by Honeytone's system.

For a while, with every disappearing dollar, the Wildcat mentally showered the absent Honeytone with epithets picked up during overstressed moments of an active life. Then to the temporary sooprem leader's mind there came a faint resolve to try the ultimate arrow of his pack in an effort to reclaim his melting money.

"De clickers!"

perched on the rail is havin' more fun than Rockefeller. Outside of farmin' I guess there ain't nothin' in the world like chummin' with blueblood hawes. A man asked me onct who was the finest gentleman I'd ever knowed, an' I answered, 'Henry of Burgoyne.'

"Who was he, Mr. Andrews?" Delilah asked.

"He was a thoroughbred hawse I owned onct, an' he was the bravest, purtiest-dispositioned creature I ever knowed. He was a gentleman."

Delilah gazed curiously at the old seamed gray face with its thin-lipped hard mouth from which this sweetness had issued; Jack Andrews, the poet, of whom men said, "Crooked as a dog's hind leg, unless you're stringin' with him." Some who hated him because of his cleverness went even farther, and declared that he would throw down his brother.

The two were walking across the infield toward Andrews' stable, which was located at the head of the three-quarter chute. As they approached the stall that held Slipper Dance, Delilah put her hand on Andrews' arm and checked in her stride. Over the lower half door the black head of Slipper Dance was hung, engulfed in the bosom of a ducky, and a slim black hand was caressing the tapered ears.

They could hear the soft cadence of the colored man's voice.

"Ol' Slippah, you lonesome 'cause you ain' got yo' Zeb Clay to sing you some li'l' Kaintuck song. I can't sleep, Slippah; I jes' can't eat."

At the conclusion of his misery he made an announcement covering the program of an attempt to defeat the evil which had run him down. He stood up on the chair where he had been sitting.

"Brethren, befo' us gits too deep into de evenin' us devotes a social hour to Lady Luck. Count off into squads, dig deep in yo' raiment fo' ammunition an' de clickin' weapons, den' fo' d' march—into de battle whah de top sides means vick'ry o' else de grave-diggin' squad! Aft' de squad leadehs decides who is de bes' man, as yo' sooprem leadeh I claims de priv'lege o' meetin' de victors on de clickin' fiel' of battle. Dat's all! Git faded an' shoot fas'!"

A battle royal! Thereafter for half an hour the air was thick with prayer. Presently most of the four thousand had been prayed into the hands of half a dozen squad leaders. Then the Wildcat spoke:

"Winnehs, Lady Luck sho' smiled down on you. Now yo' sooprem leadeh makes 'at woman laff at you. Stan' by me, Lily!"

The mascot goat bleated her message of encouragement. Spectators rallied around. Out of his left shoe the Wildcat hauled his personal weapons. On the floor before him he cast the last fragment of his four-thousand-dollar roll. In the narrow circle of victors exploded his point-blank challenge.

"Shoots a hundred! Shower down! Ah craves action!"

You neech kin tell till de gallopers stop
Whut de numbehs reads dat lays on top.
Comin' out a top side seven or leven
Is Wilcat talk fo' a pay-day heaven.
Seven's a winner when it shows up fast,
But aft' yo' point a seven means bust.
Comin' out just wid a dooce, twelve o' tray
Is jes' like throwin' your money away.
'Cept you keeps de dice an' stahs once mo'
By layin' yo' money on de gam'lin' flo'.
Suppose you releases a fo', six, eight,
You tries yo' bes' to duplicate.
De same hot's true fo' a five, nine, ten,
But a seven's boun' to git you now an' then.
As I said befo', does a seven come fast,
Befo' you makes yo' point, it means youse bust.

In fifteen minutes six ex-victors had joined the circle of innocent bystanders and were hunting for phrases to explain to themselves just how it happened. The Wildcat, stowing away the incoming money with his left hand, swept his victorious right high above his head. In his moist palm nestled his pussional dice.

"I lets it lay! Shoots it all!"

"Ain't got dat much." The last man was suffering from reduced circumstances.

"How much is you? Shoots de fifty! Ise faded. Gallopers stan' by me! Stay

sooprem! Bam! An' I reads six-ace. Deppity, youse done!"

The Wildcat, perspiring copiously in his official robes of supremacy, got to his feet. He parked the gallopers in his inside pocket. He reached for Lily's leading string.

"Brethren, me an' Lily started sooprem when we come heah. Dat's de way we finishes. I bids you good night!"

With Lily at his heels, the favorite of Lady Luck made his way into the midnight fog which lay above the city. He walked to Market Street and at the ferry building he headed down the Embarcadero toward the pier where the Empire was loading. In the deep shadows cast by a post in the long pier he removed his trailing robe. He rolled his insignia under his arm. Under the arc lights along the pier the men of the night shift were rustling the last of the freight into the Empire's side.

With Lily at his heels, the Wildcat went aboard the ship. The officer on watch recognized him.

"What you doin' out so late, boy? Thought you run the day shift."

"Cap'n, yessuh, I does. Me an' Lily was projectin' roun' some. Us ain't got no place to go." The Wildcat lingered on this last statement, "no place to go." Then he summoned courage enough to voice a request which expressed a longing that had developed since he had first known the Empire's destination.

"Cap'n, suh," he said slowly, "kin me an' Lily ride wid you to N'Orleans? Us craves to git South."

"I'll say you can! We need about nine good waiters for the trip."

"Cap'n, suh, dat's me! When us starts Ise de same as nine."

"You're hired. Sign on to-morrow."

In his eagerness the Wildcat jerked heavily at Lily's leading string.

"Come on heah, goat, le's git down in de ol' boat's cellar where de kitchen is an' git to work. Say youse 'bliged to the cap'n."

"Bl-a-a!" Lily voiced her gratitude.

On the third deck down the Wildcat tied Lily to a stanchion. He threw his official costume on the deck in front of the goat.

"See kin you eat dis sooprem raiment. Us is done bein' sooprem. Hot dam! New Awluns boun'! Den Memphis—dat's home!"

The Wildcat felt the thick packages of bank notes in the inside pockets of his yaller suit.

"Sho' big money. Money, dis time stan' by me."

I kin ride a steamboat; I don't pay no fare;
I kin ride a steamboat—anywhere.
Dat's de reason Ise as happy as a bee;
Me an' Lily's Memphis boun'—Memphis,
Ten-o-see.

WHO LAUGHS LAST

(Continued from Page 17)

The horse drew up his head and tickled the ducky's cheek with his mouse-gray muzzle. Then he saw Andrews and Delilah, cocked his ears, and as if giving the ducky a warning exhaled a rippling breath of unrest.

Zeb turned in alarm. "Scuse me, Mistah Andrews," he pleaded; "dat's my ol' hoss, an' I was jes' sayin' good mornin' to him."

"Lovely!" Delilah whispered.

"That's all right, Zeb," Andrews answered; "it won't do him no harm, a bit of gentlin'."

"Mistah Andrews, cain't yeh take Zeb on to rub ol' Slippah? Guess I'd 'bout wo'k foh 'nuff to eat."

"But you're workin' for Barney Lee; I wouldn't take nobody's man away from him."

"I quit dis mawnin', Mistah Andrews. I cain't stan' it. I jes' wo'ked in his bahn 'cause ol' Slippah was dere."

"Hire him," Delilah said in a low voice; "Slipper Dance loves dat ducky."

"I'll think it over, Zeb," Andrews answered.

They were interrupted by the appearance of Trainer Cooper and a stable man with a saddle over his arm.

"I'm goin' to give Slipper Dance his gallop," Cooper said.

The horse was saddled and brought out of the stall; a riding boy was lifted to his back, and Andrews turning to Delilah asked: "Would you like to walk over to the rail an' see Slipper work?"

"I'm goin' to break him right from the head of the chute here, an' let him rate

pretty free right round to within the distance of the finish. I guess the clockers won't figger on that, an' the watches'll tell them nothin'." Cooper advised.

But Delilah had been watching a pantomime. The soft dark-brown eyes of Zeb had been talking; they had been sending a mute message that he had something on his mind that she should know.

"You go on, Mr. Andrews," she said, "and I'll join you in a few minutes. I've got to put a safety pin in my skirt; I dressed in a hurry this morning."

When Andrews and the trainer had walked away Zeb said: "Scuse me, missis"—he was opening the lower half door of the stall—"I'll jes' slip in heah, an' you stan' close to de do'r, 'cause Zeb got some mos' straordin'ry 'tic'lars to tell yeh. Ef yeh see any fellah comin' jes' give a li'l' cough."

He had closed the door behind him, and Delilah leaning an elbow on its top said: "Hurry, please; I want to see Slipper Dance run."

"Yeh own dat hoss, missis?"

Half annoyed at the question Delilah answered sharply "No!"

"Dat's right, missis, dat's right; yeh stick to dat. Tell 'em yeh own Drummah."

"But I don't own Drummah."

"Yes, yeh do, missis; yes, yeh do, fo' suah. An' when yeh go back to de hotel yeh tell Mistah Andrews to give yeh dat bill ob sale on Drummah dat yeh gib Mistah Andrews de check foh 'tirty-one hundred dollahs foh."

(Continued on Page 32)



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listed in order of release

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Roscoe ("Fatty") Arbuckle in
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By Elmer Harris and Geraldine Bonner.

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"A Wise Fool"
By Sir Gilbert Parker

A drama of the Northwest.
Cosmopolitan production
"The Woman God Changed"
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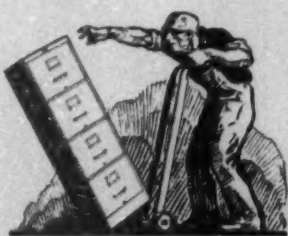
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(Continued from Page 30)

Delilah had been indignant at the darky's gratuitous suggestions; at his mention of the check she was startled.

"But I didn't give Mr. Andrews a check for Drummer."

"Yes, yeh did, missis; don't deny dat. An' get de bill ob sale to-day."

Delilah remained silent for five seconds; then her quick sense guided her.

"Zeb," she said, "I understand you are trying to do me a good turn."

"Suah I am, missis; an' I'm tryin' to stop a bad man f'om hahmin' a lady. Yeh jes' listen fas', missis, 'cause Zeb's goin' to talk fas'."

Las' night I was sleepin' in a stall ovah to Mistah Lee's stable 'cause I'd got a headache an' didn't wan' to roll de bones wit de othah colahed boys; an' Mistah Lee an' his trainah was talkin' jes' at de doah, same's we are, Mistah Lee he's tellin' Trainah Burt dat Mistah Andrews claimed Slippah Dance foh yeh, an' dat yeh'd gib Mistah Andrews a check for t'irty-one hun'ed dollahs, an' dat a frien' ob his had heahed Mistah Andrews tell yeh aftah de race at Orwo'th Pakk dat yeh'd got Slippah Dance in de claim."

"Ah!" This exclamation had been wrung from Delilah by her remembrance of that very incident.

Zeb thought she had coughed a warning. "Am somebody comin', missis?" he whispered.

"No—go on."

"Den he tells Trainah Burt what to do. Dey's goin' to let Slippah Dance win to-morrow, an' run second wid Cohnet; den de trainah'll lodge a 'jection wid de stewa'ds dat Slippah Dance didn't run in his ownah's name, an' dat Mistah Andrews broke de rules when he claimed de hawse foh anothah pahty. Den de stewa'ds'll suah take dat race 'way f'om ol' Slippah an' gib it to Cohnet. Mistah Lee am goin' bet heaby on Cohnet, an' he tol' de trainah dat you' husban' 'd bet heaby on Slippah Dance an' it'd break him, 'cause he's got some big minin' trouble. Now, don' yeh see, missis, dat Bahney Lee has got it all wrong—'cause yeh bought Drummah'?"

In spite of the shock this revelation had caused, a smile curled Delilah's red lips at Zeb's subtle strategy; it was wonderful.

"Yeh bes' go now, missis, to see Slippah Dance stretch dem beaut'ful long laigs ob his—'cause dat's all I know."

Delilah opened her purse and tendered Zeb Clay a twenty-dollar bill; but the darky pushed it away with his slim black hand, saying: "No, missis, yeh jes' hook me up wit' dat ol' Slippah—dat's all I wan'." Foh de Lawd! I'll get sick ef I don' chum wit' him."

"You'll chum with him, Zeb—I'll see to that," Delilah answered as she moved away.

It was twenty yards to the head of the three-quarter chute, but Delilah was only in time to see the black horse pulling up after his gallop.

As he turned and came up the chute toward them a dun-colored horse, a buckskin with a curious patch of bright yellow hair in his tail just at the croup, thundered by, the boy on his back almost pulled out of the saddle with the eagerness of the buckskin's fight for a free rein.

"There he goes!" Cooper exclaimed. "Just clap an eye on that fellow, Mr. Andrews."

"Some mover!" the patriarch murmured. "What is it?"

"They call him Yellow Tail," Cooper answered; "he's a maiden three-year-old."

"If he's a three-year-old and a maiden, I guess he's just what he looks like—a mornin' glory; a deuce of a hawse when there ain't no other hawses to fight, an' when he's up agen it in a race, quits."

"Hank Armour bought him off Madden in New York," Cooper added. "I don't know where Hank got the money to buy a horse; he's been up agen it for a couple of years."

"Well, Hank the Hush won't tell nobody," the patriarch declared.

Cooper laughed. "No, Armour's well named, Hank the Hush; he never opens his mouth only when he's goin' to eat. Yellow Tail's in the Haviland Plate to-morrow."

As they turned toward the stable Andrews' throat rumbled as if he were trying the experiment of a chuckle. "A maiden three-year-old that Madden sells oughter be in a race for ash-cart hawses; 'cause Hank must've got him for next to nothin'."

"I think likely Hank's startin' him to qualify for the consolation purse for beaten

horses the last day. I've heard that an old darky in Madden's barn who used to work for Hank was rubbin' this horse, and wrote Hank a letter that he was good, but for sale cheap as Madden didn't like him."

"That don't mean nothin'," the patriarch declared; "Madden weeds out every year the hawses that don't show good form, an' most like give this skate to the nigger; then the nigger gets Hank to buy him for a couple of hundred, an' Hank thinks he'll find some sucker here that'll give him a thousand on the hawse's mornin' work."

Cooper pointed at Slipper Dance, who was striding in front with the long springy reach of a thoroughbred. "That gallop hasn't affected his heel, sir."

"No, he ain't favorin' that off fore none. I guess that new plate is jus' 'bout right."

"I've pared down the frog some," Cooper submitted, "and that crack has just about growed out."

With the story of Lee's new treachery in her mind Delilah intimated to Andrews that she was anxious to get back to the hotel.

At the motor car Andrews opened the door of the tonneau, but Delilah objected: "I'll sit in front with you, Mr. Andrews. I've got something to tell you."

When they had swung out to the road Delilah related what Zeb Clay had told her. Regulating the gas and rotating the steering wheel gave the patriarch a proper physical accompaniment to the mental reception of this story; it took the place of his habitual beard caressing. So he sat entirely silent throughout; even when Delilah had come to the end of the tale the patriarch's attention seemed riveted entirely upon navigation.

"What had we better do—scratch Slipper Dance? You won't want to get into trouble," Delilah said after they had traversed three or four blocks in silence.

"No, I don't want no more trouble 'n I've got," the old man answered.

"If you were to tell Barney Lee what we know about him—that I overheard him plotting to pull Slipper Dance and interfere with Drummer in that race at Orwo'th Park—wouldn't he be afraid to do anything to-morrow?" Delilah asked.

"I don't want to tell Barney Lee nothin'."

"I'm jus' figgerin' how to beat him out; an' if he don't know that we know his little game it'll be easier. That guttersnipe is as full of tricks as a ship in full of rats. If you show him four aces he'd stack a straight flush up agen you. I'm jus' thinkin'."

"What about Zeb's suggestion as to my ownin' Drummer instead of Slipper Dance?"

"It's kinder bad policy to cover up anythin' that ain't quite right by doin' somethin' else that ain't right too. There's been more tinware throwed away because of leaks than the factories'll turn out in the next ten years. I'm jus' thinkin' how to trim Mister Barney; how to jus' let him hold the cards he's got, an' draw a better hand."

Then the patriarch became submerged in his navigation, ostensibly submerged in it—sometimes growling at a man on a bicycle who wheeled into his path, sometimes voicing anathema against a street car that held him up.

Suddenly he exclaimed, "Yes, by hokey! That's what I'll do!"

The car, as if as astonished as Delilah, came to a sudden halt. There was nothing in front in the way of obstruction; no warning hand of a blue-coated policeman; they had just stopped.

"Has the car stalled, Mr. Andrews?" Delilah queried.

A gurgle emanated from behind the gray beard. "No, missis, I guess Elizabeth was kinder upset at me talkin' in my sleep."

He laid his heavy foot on the starter, and as they bowled along with the merry clatter of increased speed Andrews added: "I jus' kinder made my mind up to draw a hand to beat Barney Lee's cards, or else lose the pot. I guess we'll trim that skunk. That was purty alip'ry of him, when he reads in the paper that Mr. Owen's up agen it in the minin', to try to set him afoot by takin' this race away. He's been nursin' that claimin' thing for a chanacet to break your husband, thinkin' he'd bet heavy."

"What are you going to do, Mr. Andrews?"

The patriarch turned the gray eyes that held an almost whimsical look on Delilah: "When I go to bed to-night I'm goin' to gag myself for fear I'll talk in my sleep an' somebody'll hear what I'm goin' to do. I guess if I was to tell you now Barney'd get

it by wireless. D'you think you can trust me to play a lone hand, Mrs. Owen?" he asked.

Delilah put those expressive fingers of hers on his shoulder. "You can go ahead, Mr. Andrews, and don't tell me or anybody; the leak in the tinware is a great idea."

"It'll take money—it always takes money to make big money—an' I ain't got it."

"I'll furnish the money, Mr. Andrews. Stewart said that I was to run the racing end of the business, and I'll take his advice."

"It's a fine thing, missis, for a woman to obey her husband, 'cause she's promised to do so—a mighty fine thing. I guess if you'll jus' trust me with a couple of thousand to-morrow mornin', you an' Mr. Owen'll ride back with me after the races to-morrow with 'bout thirty or forty thousand dollahs."

"Oh!" Delilah's eyes held the red amber light.

"Yes, missis. An' Barney Lee'll be tryin' to remember what his name is; maybe he'll be cussin'."

"I'll give you the money in the mornin'," Delilah declared; "I've got nearly ten thousand in the bank that I won over Condor. We'll just sit tight, Mr. Andrews, and spring this surprise on Stewart."

The patriarch, as if shocked at having roused this enthusiasm, lapsed into one of his characteristic gloom clouds. "Hawse racin' ain't like runnin' a bank, Mrs. Owen; an' things goes wrong. I'm jus' sayin' that we got a chanacet—a purty good chanacet."

"And I'm game to take it, Mr. Andrews."

"I knowed you was, an' that's why I'm goin' to put this trick over now. I've been hatchin' somethin' for a leetle later on, an' if it come off I calc'lated I'd cop enough to buy that leetle farm down in Kentucky for when I get ol', but I guess I kinder took a fancy to you, an' I'm goin' to turn that trick to-morrow for you an' Mr. Owen."

"For the three of us," Delilah declared emphatically; "you'll have half."

"After it's all over, Mrs. Owen, settlin' 'll be lef' to you; 'cause if it falls down you'll have to pocket the losin's. We're home now," he added as the car turned into the little street, and pulled up at the side entrance of the King James. "There ain't nothin' more to do," Andrews said as he sat for a second, "but jus' wait for the Haviland Plate to-morrow; I got it all thought out, an' we got a purty good chanacet—a purty good chanacet. Jus' tell Mr. Owen to go to that minin' deal with both hands; that you're sec'tary-treasurer of the association. Kinder don't sot him too high up in the air, 'cause good things sometimes falls down—they sometimes falls down."

"You're a brick, Mr. Andrews," Delilah applauded.

"Mos' fellers thinks I'm 'bout's hard's a brick," he said grimly; "but I guess a nice woman can make mos' any man loosen up."

It rained again that night; a series of warm caressing showers that just nurtured the track into a velvet softness, a gentle responsive cushion to the pounding hoofs that would throb its breast next day. The morning sun kissed the day into a happy awakening; the air pulsed with fresh buoyancy.

But Owen was pessimistic; he was like a man floating on a sea of deep waters who is not seeking further adventures.

"Dubois has put in an affidavit that I have no interest whatever in Shining Tree," he informed Delilah; "and the frog-eatin' Johnny Crapaud has instigated the Red Ledge people to sue me for payment for a bunch of stock that I was to have as a bonus on that deal."

"But, Stewart," Delilah objected, "we have become specialists; I am to look after the racing end of it."

"I wish you wouldn't. I wish you'd give it up," Owen growled, holding, outstretched, a pair of military hairbrushes, to turn straight-looking eyes on his wife.

"Well, I won't! That ought to settle it, Tootie—it will save friction. But why give it up?"

"Well, I don't want to round on a man I've palled with, but Andrews is too smooth for you; he's out for Jack Andrews. I'm out for Stewart Owen, an' Stewart Owen can take care of himself, girl."

"And a pinhead Frenchman has got you tied in a knot—you can!"

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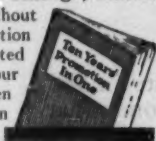
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"I'll untie that knot, an' twist the string around Frenchie's neck. But it'll take money. I can't afford to gamble on horses now—this mine's a bigger thing."

"I'm not asking you for any money, Tootie; I've got my own; and it didn't come out of your pocket."

"You'll lose it back, that's what always happens in racin'. Better to turn your ten thousand over to me to plank down to hold Shinin' Tree."

"Stewart"—Delilah slipped back to the floor the slim foot on which she had been lacing a shoe—"your sudden conversion to worldly wisdom is refreshing; but it makes me very, very tired. I'm going down to breakfast."

After breakfast Delilah crossed the street to the bank and drew twenty-five hundred dollars; back at the hotel she gave two thousand to Andrews, saying: "I think we're in luck—I feel it; it rained last night, and that's good for Slipper Dance, isn't it?"

"Yes, Mrs. Owen; the track ain't heavy—it's just a lucky carpet. We got a good chance, a purty good chance."

"You just handle this money as you like, Mr. Andrews," she said; "you needn't ask me anything about it."

"Yes, missis, that's the best way; I been put away more'n once by fellers that was in with me botherin' an' gettin' me fussed. Soon's the race is over I'll turn the funds over to you—if there is any. I see Barney down to the track this mornin'; him an' Burt is passin' me, an' Lee says somethin' to his trainer, an' Burt he turns an' grins at me. I guess he won't grin none after the Haviland Plate. I guess I'll come nigh laughin' myself, though I don't laugh none too much."

All the way down to the Grapevine in the chariot that Andrews called Elizabeth, the patriarch drooped, somber, gray, like the figure of Time, over the spoked wheel in his grasp. And Owen, his broad shoulders thrown back against the seat, puffed strenuously, moodily, at a big black cigar.

Once he took the Havana from his lips to whisper: "What's the idea, girl? What's that mournful cuss goin' to do?"

For Delilah, back at the hotel, had told Stewart that Barney Lee was going to try to put over something.

"I don't know, and I don't want to," Delilah whispered back sullenly. "When you're buying a mine you send an engineer to look at it and you leave it to him; that's what I'm doing."

The Haviland Plate was the third race. Delilah had been advised by Andrews to refrain from going to the saddling paddock, as Lee would have her watched for any evinced interest in Slipper Dance. So she sat on the club steps with Stewart.

From the jockey board across the track she saw that there were ten starters. The race itself was a mile—once around the track.

Cornet was Number 1; he had the rail position. Number 2 was Yellow Tail; then down in seventh place was Slipper Dance. Even this was an invitation to Owen to grouse.

As they sat on the club steps he said: "Your horse couldn't've picked a worse spot if he'd tried. He's near the middle of the bunch, an' he'll get pinched off before the first turn. I guess Barney Lee's got a pull with somebody, 'cause he's got the rail."

"Oh!" exclaimed Delilah, looking across the track, "that good jockey, Soren, is riding that Yellow Tail horse we saw yesterday."

"Who is Yellow Tail?" Owen queried. "I guess he ain't much with one hundred four pounds on his back, an' this is a condition race."

"No, he never won a race," Delilah answered.

"D'you know what I've a notion to do?" Owen asked. "I've a notion to go down an' bet fifty cents on him—that's my idea of playin' the horses. You'll get as much fun out of playin' four bits on an outsider as you will a thousand on the favorite, an' no comeback."

"There's Mr. Andrews down on the lawn," Delilah said. "Shall we go down? The sunshine looks good."

When they had joined the Man From the Desert he said: "Well, I guess I'd better get along to the Iron Men an' buy a few tickets. I don't hear nothin' out in the paddock but Barney Lee's Cornet an' Slipper Dance. There's a couple others bein' touted as dark horses—Lord Henry an' the White Lady."

"What am I to do, uncle?" Owen asked.

"Don't ask me, son. Any man that's got a hawse in the race is prejudiced—he ain't a good adviser."

"What about Slipper Dance?"

"Stewart"—and Delilah put a gloved hand on his arm—"just don't bet at all; Mr. Andrews is my commission agent to-day—he's doing the betting."

"Yes," the patriarch corroborated; "I'm bettin' aplenty for both of you."

"That bein' so," Owen laughed, "here's a hundred-dollar bill, uncle; I'm goin' to copper your bets. You take it in there an' bet it on some outsider at long odds—the horse you think might win on a fluke. Get me? Somethin' that'll be ten or twenty to one. I don't want to sit down an' have no bet."

The patriarch took the bill. Presently he returned to where Delilah and Stewart sat on a bench on the lawn. He took a roll of bills from his pocket, saying as he held them toward Delilah, practically hidden in his big hand, "Here's a thousand," Mrs. Owen; put it in your bag."

"Didn't you bet?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am. I bet five hundred in there. I got the tickets in my pocket; an' your hundred, too, Mr. Owen. An' afore I left the hotel I got Chicago on the phone and bet five hundred; that'd save cuttin' the odds here."

"On your horse, uncle?" Owen asked.

"Yes, sir; on my hawse. I guess that thousand is 'bout 'nough for to-day. Sometimes things goes wrong, an' a thousand birds in the hand is better'n havin' 'em in the bush."

"What'd you bet my hundred on, uncle?"

"A long shot. I'll give you the tickets when the race is over; I don't want you rootin' agen Mrs. Owen."

"All right, uncle; I'll have the laugh on you, Lilah, when the race is over; you'll see me toddlin' down there to collect a thousand."

"Well, Stewart, we'll break even, then."

"I'll break ahead; there'll be no we to it. This is no fifty-fifty game. If the betters saw you putting five hundred in the fifty-dollar machine wouldn't that cut the odds on Slipper Dance—wouldn't they think you were sure?" Owen asked.

"There ain't none of my tickets for fifty—they're ten-dollar tickets. They was strung along, an' nobody see me bet 'em, either," the patriarch declared.

"There they come!" Stewart cried, for a cornet just at the paddock gate had voiced its silver notes.

And presently the ten thoroughbreds were seen streaming across the grassed paddock beneath the full-leaved trees, and then out to the course.

As the horses passed the lawn Owen said: "I wish you'd tell me what my hundred's on, uncle. If I was bettin' it myself I'd put it on that gray—that's a slippery-lookin' trick."

"Well, son, she ain't none too bad a hawse, that filly; you keep rootin' for her, an' that won't do no harm."

"Well, I guess I'm not on the gray then," Owen growled; "but this is like playin' poker in the dark."

The Man From the Desert took the betting tickets from his pockets, sorted them over, and passed ten to Owen, saying: "I guess you might's well have some fun out of it, even if you do lose your hundred."

Owen looked at the numbers on the tickets; then scanned the horses. "These're on that peroxide buckskin, Yellow Tail, eh?"

"Yes, son; my trainer tells me he's been workin' purty well. I guess he's 'bout the best hawse outside Slipper Dance an' Cornet; an' that's what you wanted—long odds; he'll be 'bout fifty to one, I reckon."

Owen slipped the tickets into his vest pocket, saying: "Come on, you peroxide! Five thousand for me if you win!"

"An' he's got a good boy up—Soren," the patriarch reasoned. "That's one reason why I put your money on him."

The horses had passed down beyond the starter's stand and were wheeling to come back.

"I'm sure Slipper Dance will win, Mr. Andrews," Delilah said; "he looks so well." Something she had overlooked flashed into her mind. "But what are Slipper Dance's odds? We won't win enough, only betting a thousand—we need so much."

"Well, it don't do to lose too much; an' I'll tell you, Mrs. Owen, Slipper Dance might not win."

"Has anything gone wrong?" she asked, a tremble of concern in her voice.

"Nothin' yet, Mrs. Owen. I guess we'd best jus' worry none till after the race; p'raps Barney Lee'll be doin' the worryin' then; he's got a purty good chance of doin' the worryin'."

Owen stood up on the bench, lifting Delilah to a place beside him. Andrews lifted his big frame awkwardly to the bench and spun his glasses out to a focus. Just in front of where the three stood, a kaleidoscope of colors—yellow, green, orange, red, purple, blue—flashed by, just as if one had rolled a cylinder with the brilliant-colored bits of glass tumbling in splashed array.

The bay and the buckskin, Cornet and Yellow Tail, raced in front; with the black, Slipper Dance, fighting his way in a bunch of racers half a length back.

At the first turn, fifty yards, Yellow Tail running with demoniac speed had pinched off the bay; and as they rounded the turn the red-sleeved black jacket of Soren was seen in front, the blond-crested tail of the buckskin whisking the nose of Cornet, who galloped at his heels.

The gray mare, the White Lady, was lapped on Cornet, and the black head of Slipper Dance rose and fell on the quarters of the gray.

Opposite the stand, halfway of the back stretch, the buckskin was running two lengths in front, and the easy swing of his stride, like the flow and ebb of lazy waters, told that the gallop was frictionless, that there a perfect physical construction moved without loss of power.

And like a gull soaring with spread wing on a gentle breeze the red-armed black jacket seemed to float with an undulating movement that caused Andrews to mutter: "That's the smoothest-runnin' hawse I ever see."

"That's my horse, Yellow Tail!" Owen chirped. "They can't live with him. See that, uncle?"

The open space between the buckskin and the bay had grown into four lengths; and Slipper Dance had pushed his black head and neck in front of the bay.

Clinging to the black like a leech was the slim-gutted gray mare, the White Lady. Rounding into the lower turn the buckskin increased his lead.

Andrews through his powerful glasses could see that Soren was being pulled out of the saddle with the eager desire of Yellow Tail. And his own boy, Kelly, was shaking up the black, urging Slipper Dance to take a position behind that flaunting beaconlike tail so that as they rounded into the stretch he could pick and choose.

The patriarch swept his glasses back to the cerise figure on Cornet.

"Billy Wells is ridin' to orders," Andrews murmured; "he's watchin' Slipper Dance, an' as they swing into the straight he'll lap his hawse on the black's quarter an' help shoo Slipper Dance in. I'll bet Barney Lee up in the stand is figgerin' he's got 'em placed, one, two."

"An' Yellow Tail'll spill the beans!" Owen almost shrieked the words. "He'll spill the beans! Come on, you peroxide!"

There was cause for this ebullition of optimism, for the buckskin had slipped around the turn with the easy glide of something that was pulled by a string. And he was at least ten lengths in front; ten lengths, and Andrews could see that Soren was holding the buckskin to check his mad flight; the boy had not moved; his arms were flat against the buckskin neck, and his arched body rose and fell in the short stirrups as the rhythmic form beneath him swung along like a duck on the wing.

Cries went up from the watchers, tangented queries: "What is that thing out in front? That'll win! He's making a run-away race of it!"

A bull-throated man bellowed: "That's Yellow Tail; he'll blow up! He can't keep that pace up; the boy on his back must be a danged fool to run his horse into the ground!"

Somebody yelled, "There comes Cornet!" Another cried, "Come on, you good old Slipper Dance! Come on, you Kelly!" For the boy on the black, and Wells on Cornet, had gone to the whip.

A sardonic smile curled the thin lips of the patriarch. "Poor old Kelly!" Owen heard him mutter. "He's been kiddin' himself that Yellow Tail'd quit an' come back to him. Now he's gettin' feared, an' I guess that Wells is wonderin' what's up. The buckskin's got 'em both guessin'."

"Is Slipper Dance beat?" Delilah gasped. Then she snapped her gloved fingers and

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sobbed, "Come on, Slipper Dance! Come on, my pet! Oh, Kelly, ride him, ride him!" But still out in front, a heartbreak to both bay and black, and cerise and green, the yellow fringe on that swishing tail gleamed mockingly in the yellow sunlight. It was like the white flag of a speeding antelope.

Owen was dancing a cancan of ecstasy. "Come on, you little runt buckskin!" he cried. "Shoot him over, Soren; you've got him down the alley. Come on, you!"

The clamor of the crowd had died out; the appalling thing of that buckskin jack rabbit a dozen lengths in front of the favorites had wiped out the stirring effects of contest. It was like a dream, unreal; it wasn't a race, it was something of accident that had happened.

"I guess it's all over," the patriarch said, lowering his glasses as the mob on the lawn in front of the grand stand cut off his vision. "Yellow Tail'll jus' romp in; there ain't nothin' to it but the buckskin. They can't catch him now. He's got everythin'—speed, an' a lightweight."

He felt fingers on his arm that trembled as their owner, Delilah, slipped down to a seat on the bench.

And Owen, as the buckskin flashed past the winning post all by himself, cut the air with a sweep of his hat and cried, "Oh, you boy, you! I'm some picker!"

Then he jumped down, jerked the tickets from his pocket and vibrated them in front of Delilah's eyes, chortling: "What about Tootie, Lilah? That skate was fifty to one, they say, an' me all by my lonely on him. Five thousand bucks to buy fodder!" He threw out his massive chest, stroked the tickets affectionately, and sat down, singing "Oh, you boy, you!"

A ghastly hush hung over the throng of people; nobody had bet on Yellow Tail. A stranger had slipped into the house and eaten the banquet on the table. All the minds there had received a rebuke; their judgments had been set awry.

Then the numbers were dropped into place: 2, 7, 1: Yellow Tail, Slipper Dance, Cornet.

"It couldn't be helped, Mr. Andrews," Delilah said sympathetically as the patriarch adjusted his angular frame to the bench. "You did the best you could; we'll win out next time."

"Yes," the old man said, exuding a great sigh that might have been one of relief or despair; "yes, I jus' done the best I could playin' agen that shark, Barney Lee. I guess he's up in the stand there somewhere cussin' the Maker of little apples."

The three placed horses were now passing in to the picket-fenced inclosure at the judges' stand. Their saddles were stripped by the jockeys, the gaudy-jacketed string of manikins popped in one door and out of another on the path that led over the weighing-in scales.

Then the burly clerk of the scales was seen to mount the steps that led to the judges' stand; and next instant, at a sign from the judge, a red board, lettered "Official," was strung along beneath the three numbers.

"Yellow Tail wins!" the patriarch commented dryly.

He drew a bunch of betting tickets from his pockets, and dropped them in Delilah's lap, saying: "I guess that'll 'bout put Mr. Owen's mine on its hind legs. He had his laugh, but who laughs las' laughs bes'."

"What—what?"

Delilah was staring at the number on the tickets, 843. "Why, Mr. Andrews!" she gasped. "These—these—on—Yellow Tail!"

"Guess that's right, missis; that's the way I bought 'em. Five hundred on Yellow Tail, that's the way I played 'em; an' five hundred bet in Chicago. An' there goes the odds—he pays one hundred four to two—that's fifty-two dollars to one."

"But—but"—Delilah's black eyes were staring in a fascinated manner at the gray, farthing eyes of the patriarch—"but why—Mr. Andrews—how did you know that Yellow Tail would win?"

The old patriarch took a tantalizing handgrip of his gray beard. "Nobody knowed it—not even Cooper—but I'm the man that gave Hank Armour two thousand dollars to buy Yellow Tail."

GRAND OPERATICS

(Continued from Page 13)

in the world of opera is hugging the Spartan's fox. No one who ever heard them will believe that such singers as Patti and Sembrich needed much beyond their voices; that Melba made her way by anything beyond her fine vocalization and beautiful emotional effects; that someone else might have got Mary Garden's dramatics and artistry into a rôle. No intelligent person has to be told that all the publicity and all the helpful influence in the world will never put a mediocrity into rank with these singers.

And yet one cannot escape the sorry admission that many an indifferent diva occupies a place beyond her true rank through the happy conspiracy of circumstances coupled with masterly application of the printer's ink. Needless to say, such accidental elevation, such fortuitous fame, is nothing to count upon or to work for. The sesame to operatic success are good physique and voice, plus artistic intelligence and capacity, plus the ability for endless labor and pains. The publicity man serves to make the opportunity for those who have these essentials and to keep alive the light of those who have shown their virtues.

One is reminded at once that publicity as we know it to-day is an American institution. Foreign artists who arrive among us seldom understand how the ink is applied or what its virtues undeniably are. They are, of course, well acquainted with the claqué, about which interesting institution something more presently. But the press agent wastes his wiles upon them. Their obtuseness in this matter is certainly one of the reasons for the widely held notion that European singers are discriminated against in this country. The fact is they do not avail themselves of the publicity man until they have learned the ropes. Then they fall in line, submit to the exactions of the newspaper calliope and welter in gold-assaying notoriety.

The publicity of opera is managed in these days in a manner very different from older times. At the Metropolitan, where the veteran William J. Guard dispenses the press notices, there is no attempt to boost or hail a singer before his or her hearing.

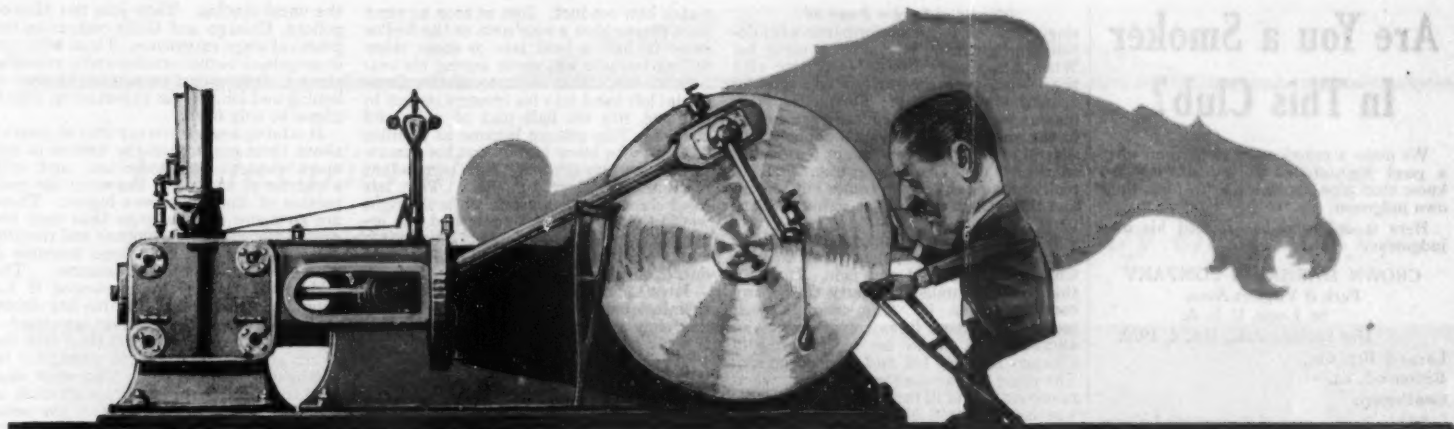
The Metropolitan has long ago become staid, aloof and institutional. The usual perfunctory data concerning singers is given out. Then the début is awaited with large and cool calm. If the singer does well and moves the audience, then the newspaper men may come and get their interviews, their yarns, their personality material. Then, too, the singer may engage the services of his or her individual publicity man. But the Metropolitan eschews all sensationalism.

Much the same attitude is taken by the Chicago company, where the perennial Rufus Dewey was master of public ceremonies for many seasons. With this troupe, however, there is still more youthful elasticity. It has not reached the middle-agedness of the Metropolitan. It takes into its fold many younger singers and has to present them to the public. Hence the press agent has enjoyed more liberty in Chicago and been permitted to give his talents freer rein. But the golden day of the operatic press agent appears to have passed.

Wherever men lead lives of special hazard or where great issues, in the personal sense, hang upon uncontrollable and fortuitous trifles, where a life's dreams may be satisfied or its hope brought low by some outrageous caprice, there will be found superstition. Whenever men strain trebly hard and aim most high, risking everything on a single venture, they will be found to put their faith in signs and omens, to spend their time on vaticinations and haruspices. This is one of the reasons for the many strange credences held by operatic people. The other principal explanation for this obvious fact lies in the numerical leadership in opera of men and women from Italy, that fabulous land where advancing culture and soaring art have constantly done battle with black magic and the dread beliefs belonging to the arboreal ages of mankind.

Thus the wife of one prominent singer plays solitaire all day long preceding an important appearance of her husband. If she fails to beat the game she concludes that the signs are not propitious and the

(Continued on Page 38)



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We make a practice not to harp on what a good pipe-tobacco Edgeworth is. We know that pipe-smokers like to form their own judgment.

Here is one who has formed his own judgment:

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St. Louis, U. S. A.
Hot Springs, Ark., Oct. 4, 1920.

Larus & Bro. Co.,
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Last week I ran out of tobacco and was unable to replenish my supply. So I bought another brand of tobacco in its place.

I went into a cigar store upon my arrival here, and when I got my hands on a can of Edgeworth it made me think of Briggs' cartoon, "Ain't It a Grand an' Glorious Feeling." It was like meeting an old friend.

Put me down as a permanent member of the Edgeworth Satisfied Smokers' Club.

Yours truly,
(Signed) J. A. Pierce
General Representative

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Do you smoke a pipe-tobacco that no other can take the place of? If not, we would be glad to have you join this new Edgeworth Satisfied Smokers' Club.

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The tobacco will come to you postpaid. It may be the pipe-tobacco you have always hoped to come across.

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We will mail to you samples of Edgeworth in both forms—Plug Slice and Ready-Rubbed.

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Both kinds pack nicely, light quickly, and burn freely and evenly.

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(Continued from Page 36)

singer goes off to his performance with decided misgivings. Nor do the cards lie. When a man goes into an enterprise with the feeling that he will fail he naturally acquits himself badly. Fortunately this man's spouse starts her solitaire game early in the morning and plays assiduously. In several hours of play one ought reasonably to expect one victorious game. Thus a really unfavorable omen comes but seldom and the artist's work is not seriously hampered.

Edoardo Ferrari-Fontana, the great Italian Wagner singer, once wore a striking Chinese ring of gold and jade. It was a thing of such unusual beauty that many commented on it. The tenor himself seemed to regard it as something of an amulet. But while he was singing in Chicago his wife fell and injured herself. The tenor had at the time suffered several minor strokes of ill fortune. When his wife was incapacitated he delayed no further. He tore off the ring and gave it away, saying that it had brought him nothing but misfortune.

Mme. Luisa Tetrassini's manager tells me that the famous soprano leggiero carries with her a small and very sharp poniard of silver with a mother-of-pearl handle. When the singer is about to go on she finds a place back stage where the wood of the floor is exposed and there drops the dagger three times from her forehead, like a boy playing mumble-the-peg. If it sticks in the wood three times the signs are all excellent. Two successful casts are not so bad, but if the knife catches only once or not at all the diva is a bit worried. However, says my informant, the dagger is always very sharp and the wood always very soft, so that an excellent augury is almost invariably achieved. Here is one way of beating the devil around the stump.

Campanini and Lady Luck

There is the common belief in many European countries that a hunchback is the purveyor of miraculous good fortune. This notion probably did not originate in the Middle Ages, but it influenced the choice of these deformed men as jesters to all the monarchs of the time and the rulers of ages antecedent. In Europe of to-day, especially in the south, one sees men and women rushing up to hunchbacks, rubbing their hands over the deformity to make a lucky contagion and then presenting the man with a coin or charm. In many countries such men make their livings in this way.

That the entertainment of these odd ideas is no index to the abilities or talents of their victim may be judged from the case of the late Cleofonte Campanini, one of the ablest conductors and most astute opera managers Italy has sent forth, and a member of a celebrated musical family. Italo Campanini, one of the foremost tenors of the last generation, was his brother; Eva Tetrassini was his wife and Luisa Tetrassini his sister-in-law. No one who ever met him entertains any doubt as to his mental alertness and flexibility. Yet I think he was one of the most superstitious men who ever attained high position.

The Campanini left-hand trousers pocket was the repository for a constantly augmenting collection of charms, amulets, luck pieces, old coins, bent nails, tiny ivory elephants, cat's-eyes, scarabs, Indian stones, buckeyes and all manner of fortune persuaders. His wife was constantly employed repairing and reinforcing this pocket in all her husband's apparel. Sometimes a pocket of leather was introduced in an attempt to stay the wearing force of Campanini's collection.

The eminent conductor had a special weakness for bent and rusty nails, which he picked up everywhere and carried until he had worn them to a luster by friction. Once when the Chicago company was playing at the Lexington in New York, Campi, as his American friends called him, was walking along the avenue toward the theater with some associates. The new Subway was building at the time, and a part of the street was planked over. Suddenly the impresario was missed. His fellows found him after a time bent down at a cross street, in a busy whirl of pedestrians and vehicles, with a gallery of passers-by stopping to watch him. He was tugging lustily at a hefty spike driven partly into the timbers. Finally the big nail yielded to his attack, and he walked away in happy triumph. Those who knew this eccentricity of the opera leader always delighted to

watch him conduct. Just as soon as some horn player blew a sour note or the fiddles came in half a beat late or some other trifling mistake was made among his battery of musicians, down went the Campanini left hand into his trousers pocket to feel and rub his half pint of nails and charms. This gesture became as familiar to those who knew him as was his characteristic pose on the dais or his pompadour of thinning and graying hair. That left hand clutching the amulets while the right wielded the baton and controlled the orchestra came to be an evoker of quiet mirth whenever Campanini stepped into the conductor's place.

Most American artists are assertive about their lack of superstition, a weakness which provokes a good many smiles. The fact is that our singers also feel the crucial strain when some large issue hangs upon an appearance before a capricious public, and are quite as likely to turn to omens and forebodings. I have seldom seen a singer, of whatever nationality or background, who did not knock wood any time he found himself guilty of boasting his present good health or fine vocal condition.

One man who was always particularly scornful of the superstitions of foreigners was taking his exercise one day when a black cat ran across his path. He immediately showed some excitement, and one of us rallied him.

"Good Lord," he exclaimed, "you don't think I believe that bunk about a black cat being bad luck? You surely know I haven't the least touch of superstition. To the contrary, a black cat always brings me good luck. I'll have a fine performance to-night; see if I don't. The cats are lucky for me."

I suppose he wonders still why he was rewarded with guffaws.

The grand-opera chorus enjoys no fame. Lamentably little has been written about it. No light of splendor shines upon it. It shimmers in the imagination with little tinsel and no luring shadow of romance is shed about its mysteries. One hears all about the chorus of Ziegfeld's Follies and Schubert's Winter Garden. It is loudly proclaimed that the most beautiful babes and pulchritudinous peacherinos in the land are to be found in these blithe assemblies, and only the deaf are not spicily aware that all these selected ladies arrive at their show houses in limousines and are certain to marry millionaires. The ambitious pennon of many a village belle points toward these shows. The same girl, if she dreams of grand opera, visions nothing less than stardom.

Men and Women of the Chorus

There are deep and wide differences between the choruses of opera and of musical comedy—in the kind of people employed, the kind of talents required, the opportunities afforded. The girls of the revue stage are chosen for their shapeliness and the prettiness of their faces. They need no voices beyond piping strength. They require no talent. Ambition is expressed in the terms of allurements and advantageous mating. Occasionally there are women ambitious for theatrical careers among these girls, but they are woefully in the minority. For those who do want to rise on the stage there is frequent opportunity. Understudying is the usual thing, and many a chorister has stepped into a part, even into stardom, from the ranks. As a general thing it is from these ambitious girls of the chorus that the leaders are graduated.

In opera all is reversed. Voice is the first requirement. The second is talent or mentality—the ability to work. The third is knowledge of opera and a repertoire of chorus parts. There is no reason why the grand-opera chorus girl should not be pretty, but she seldom is. Again, there is no reason why the opera girl should not be young, but, once more, she rarely is burdened with youth. Why? Because many of the choristers are men and women who set out to be stars and spent years discovering that they had no such destiny within them. By the time defeat has brought them to the chorus the bloom is no longer full upon their cheeks. And, again, because the choristers most prized in opera are those who know thirty or forty works, three or four languages and all the details of many performances. Such knowledge is acquired only with time.

To-day there are, despite these general facts, a good many younger girls in the choruses of the big companies recruited from

the vocal studios. They join the Metropolitan, Chicago and Gallo companies for practical stage experience. Those who can do so go back to their studios and eventually abroad. Only a part remain in the chorus, hoping and longing for opportunity, which comes to only few.

It is fairly accurate to say that at present about three-quarters of the women in our opera choruses are Americans, and only a quarter of the men. Formerly the proportion of Europeans was higher. There are so many more women than men because among Americans music and the arts in general are still considered feminine if not effeminate accomplishments. The middle-class American is pleased if his daughter is musical, but if his boy shows any such tendencies the parent is worried—fears that he has brought a sissy into the world and worries lest the youngster be destined to an evil end. The same man goes to hear Caruso and brags about it as something of distinction. Yea, the same man, when he comes to New York, takes in Caruso, the Hippodrome and a prize fight!

The Manager's Troubles

There is another reason why girls of the opera chorus are usually neither beautiful nor young. (I must make a reservation in self-defense. There are exceptions, as noted.) Marriage has always played havoc with the impresario in the matter of his minor girl singers. This is not true so much of the sedentary great companies as of the traveling troupes, though the serious-minded and ambitious girl with a flair for music and some general cultural sympathies is always and everywhere a marital prize sought by men of more maturity and better type.

The practical ability of the opera singer and of the artistic person in general is frequently underestimated. The assumption seems to be that because the business man can't sing the singer can't transact business. The notion is wrong in general and correct in some instances. Artists are not primarily engaged in fiduciary affairs, and have neither time nor liking for the detail of money-making. But it would be rash to conclude that the vocalist doesn't know how to take care of himself. Many an impresario will testify, with some eagerness I fancy, that singers are all too capable in this respect.

There is no question that certain managers have been able to take advantage of the artist's laxity and inexperience. But this condition obtained more in the past. To-day the man who pilots a first-rate singer knows that his fortune is tied up with that of his star and that fair and honest treatment all around is the only paying plan. Every manager will tell you that a contract between himself and a singer binds him and leaves the artist free. Nothing can compel a singer to appear on schedule, to keep agreements. He may plead illness or bad voice or any one of a dozen excuses. If he finds that he has contracted for too small pay and that his manager is getting more than he deems fair he can balk and demand a revision of the contract. The manager must yield if the artist is a valuable property, for without the good will of the performer a contract is a scrap of paper. One cannot take a vocalist into court effectively. The world is wide, music is an international language, and nothing restrains the tonal artist from going to the ends of civilization. Moreover, the public is with the singer and cares not a whoop for managerial woes.

On the other hand, the experiences of singers with what are termed fly-by-night managers, and especially with many mushroom impresarios who spring up in Europe and the Latin-American countries, as well as in the United States, have been notoriously bad, so that many performers are almost childishly suspicious. The custom of failing to pay artists must have been far more prevalent in the past than at present, to judge from the wariness of many of them. One must remember here that the great singer of to-day was a beginner not long ago, and that as such he probably played in small companies such as have the habit of going to the ditch and leaving the players unpaid. After the ghost has failed to walk a few times, generally leaving the singer in most embarrassing predicaments, he cannot be blamed if he takes nothing for granted.

It is a jesting conclusion among impresarios that tenors are difficult and vain,

(Continued on Page 40)

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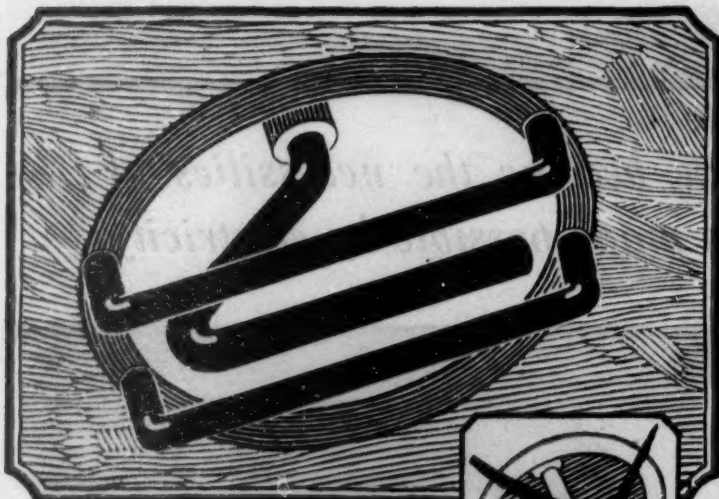
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(Continued from Page 38)

while barytones are sensible and often too canny. One manager tells how two barytones made it interesting for him. They were in a sense rivals, and little love was lost between them, but that did not prevent them from seizing opportunity when it came along, to the disadvantage of their employer.

One barytone was employed on a weekly salary basis of four hundred dollars, let us say. He was paid every week as long as he remained with the troupe. It mattered not whether he sang. The other man got three hundred a performance and was guaranteed two appearances a week. Each extra performance brought his three hundred dollars and added just that much to the manager's outlay. Naturally this singer was used only twice weekly, except in emergencies. Since there were no other barytones in the company, the second singer saw his chance and took his rival into confidence.

"You play sick part of the time," said he. "Then our boss will have to use me five or six performances a week and you only two or three. You will get your pay just the same and I'll get three hundred for each extra opera. I'll give you one hundred out of every extra appearance I make. Besides, it will make things easier for you. He's getting six a week out of you for four hundred. It's too much."

Do what the manager would, he could not break this barytone trust. Instead of a thousand dollars a week for barytone singing he was forced to pay out an average of two thousand. Fortunately he had a prosperous season and was able to meet the gouge. When he complained to his barytones at the end of the tour one of them grinned at him impishly and said: "Good business! High finance, wasn't it? You see, we have learned that American idea."

Caruso's Arithmetic

In 1908, when Caruso went out on his first concert tour, the veteran operatic manager, Max Hirsch, walked into the tenor's private car one afternoon on the trip west and found Caruso sitting before a desk with a large sheet of wrapping paper spread before him and a pencil clutched in his hand. He was humming Celeste Aida and making rapid marks on the paper as he proceeded. Hirsch watched him for a time in astonishment and amusement. Then as Caruso finished his aria humming he stepped up and asked what on earth was going on.

"See, Max," said Caruso, "I'm figuring out how much a note I'm getting on this tour. I've just hummed over the whole concert. Each one of those marks is one note."

"How much does it amount to?" asked Hirsch, interested himself.

Caruso began to count up his tallies and make calculations. After a while he looked up with a smile of triumph.

"It comes to two-fifty a note, Max," said he.

It costs a good deal more these days to evoke sound from the Caruso throat.

In 1913, when Fortune Gallo brought Ruggiero Leoncavallo over from Italy to conduct at the production of his Zaza, the party was caught in Chicago between trains and had some hours to put in. It was night, and there was nothing to do but to wait about the dingy neighborhood of the disconsolate Union Station. Leoncavallo shortly espied a beer saloon and confided to Gallo that he was consumed with thirst for American beer and curiosity about saloons. The two crossed the street and went into a sorry-looking place, while the composer's secretary and some others followed, not without misgiving.

The trim, dapper, dynamic impresario and the big, deep-chested, heavy-pouched, iron-gray, Nietzschean-mustached composer attracted absolutely no attention in this polyglot place. They were just a couple of foreigners talking some impossible language. A waiter in a very dirty apron poked a saucerful of baked beans and a chunk of bread under the nose of Leoncavallo as he stood at the bar sipping his beer. It was the custom of the place to urge its free lunch upon customers. The composer got a whiff of the beans and forthwith attacked them. He had a second helping and more beer. After a bit he got tired of standing and retired to a table with Gallo and a third portion of the steaming lunch. The beans were excellent, as the free lunch of those days often was.

The beer was cold and clear and sharp. There was no such beer in all the length of Italy. Leoncavallo poured it down with expansive satisfaction.

But the secretary of the musician was scandalized. The great Leoncavallo, the composer of Pagliacci, the darling of the Parisian lyric stage and all Italy, sitting in this low pub drinking beer and eating free lunch! He buzzed about like an angry fly, trying by every means to budge the weighty musician. Gallo watched the secretary, half amused and half annoyed. He was enjoying both the beans and Leoncavallo's enjoyment of them. Finally the composer himself became aware of his assistant's interference.

"Get out! Get away!" he bawled ferociously. "Am I to have no pleasure because I have a dignified secretary?"

And he went on ingesting the comestibles of the alehouse till train time.

In one of the notable companies some years ago there was a youthful and charming prima ballerina who caught the eye of most of the men in the troupe. One of the conductors became more and more enamored of the girl, and shortly decided that he ought to tell her about it. She turned him off with a taunting pirouette.

But the director is too important and aloof a person to be treated with contempt by a chit of a ballet girl. He didn't know just what to do about it. There was no complaining about the girl's work. Indeed, she was far too triumphant a favorite to be attacked directly. The conductor waited and watched. He had quite enough self-conceit to conclude that there must be something behind the dancer's rejection of his suit.

The music master had not long to wait for proof of this credible conclusion. He saw that the ballerina was deep smitten with the young chief tenor, who was returning her ardor in full measure. The maestro made certain that the girl had told her story to her lover and that both were secretly laughing at his discomfiture. Rage consumed him. He brooded and calculated. Presently an inspiration flickered in his mind.

Three days later there was a performance of Carmen. The conductor resolved to be revenged on the lovers at one throw, and Bizet's opera gave him the opportunity. In the second act of Carmen is the difficult and sustained flower song for the tenor, a piece that taxes the singer severely enough when properly timed. But supposing the orchestra tempo were made very slow, dragging out the notes and protracting the tax on the tenor's voice and mind.

The Conductor's Revenge


It was an important performance. The house was full to the doors. In forbidding ranks sat the critics, seeking whom they might undo. The first act went off beautifully, as did the first part of the second. Then came Don José for his meeting with the heartless cigarette girl. The flower song began. Never in the history of opera was it played so slowly, with such doleful prolongation of notes, such impossible tempo. The tenor filled his lungs and sang with all the power that was in him, trying vainly to keep the funeral pace of the orchestra. He nearly collapsed when he had finished his maltreated show piece. He knew without thought that his performance had been ruined and he understood why.

The tortured tenor got much the same treatment in the third act, but in the fourth came the climax of cruelty. This act opens with the ballet before the arena. Those who know the piece well will remember the passages where the chief dancer is held poised on her toe while the orchestra sings its notes. She stays there as long as human flesh and bone will hold her, balanced in that painful pose. Here the orchestra leader scored once more. He caught the poor dancer up on her toe and simply held the note indefinitely. She might pose there until her toe gave way under her, or she might come down flat-footed in an awkward and baffling pause—enough to ruin her performance. The latter was what she was forced to do. She fled from the stage in tears and sought consolation with her discouraged tenor.

"These love affairs are not good for one's art," he told the unhappy ballerina. "You danced atrociously to-night."

Human? All too human.

Editor's Note—This is the second of three articles by Mr. Smith. The final one will appear in an early issue.



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THE CHILD WHO CAME BACK

(Continued from Page 15)

money from him he felt that he was doing him no wrong. And the wardrobe woman looked after him as well as she knew how. It was true that she forgot the naps at odd moments which his other mother, his last mother, the mother he had had when he started—between real mothers and play ones it was all rather mixing—had invariably contrived while they were going along on trains, or on wooden hotel verandas, with his eyes turned away from the blistering sun, and a bit of mosquito netting over his face. But then you could not expect her to remember things like that when she had so much else to do. Joe had no wish to remind her. Life was much more amusing as it was, though he had to be shaken awake in the morning or else bundled into his clothes while he was still more than half asleep, his head rolling from side to side.

The story of The Child Who Came Back was the regeneration of a young woman by means of the sickness, death and reappearance in spirit form of her little son. By the introduction of the supernatural the lover was convinced of the error of his ways, the young wife and her husband were reunited, and before the final curtain the little ghost was laid.

The sensational success of the production was due, as Morris Behren well knew, to the nicety of the adjustments that he had made. Masterly as was Leona's rendering of the part, she never could have carried it without Joe. For Joe's charm was that of the rare flower growing in the crannied wall. An English lady had imparted to him his diction, and by Behren's order his rare naturalness had been preserved.

"Play like you want to, Joe," Morris had said in coaching him. "You don't need to run and jump the same way every time. Do it like it comes into your head!"

This spontaneity in combination with Leona's art produced an exquisite blend. So interwoven were the two rôles that one continually offset the other. When Joe stood in the spot light Leona receded into the shadows; when Leona came forward he retreated; whether occupying foreground or background, each was notable; the audience remained in doubt as to which gave the more finished performance, vacillating throughout the evening between the two.

The result of the evening's success was a run on the box office next day, and when Harson arrived at the theater with the intention of buying a seat for the next night's performance he discovered that the house was sold out; so he bought an admission instead.

Leona was in high feather when Mandy brought her the morning paper with its columns full of praise. She was rather ashamed of having made an exhibition of herself before Behren for nothing, and of taking it out on Joe. Why not summon the little boy and make an effort at conciliation?

In an offhand manner, as though she were demanding a second boiled egg, she said to the maid, "Quit that everlasting fussing with my things and go tell the wardrobe woman to bring me the kid."

Mandy went when it suited her, returning with the report that Joe was not yet awake. Leona felt balked and annoyed.

"What business has he got to sleep later than I do?" she snapped. "Spoiled little brat!"

That was the end of her impulse to offer amends.

Joe did not enter her mind again until late that afternoon when, as she was reading The Woman Pays in her hastily improvised sitting room at the hotel, there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," said Leona, readily closing the book, which was not sufficiently salacious to interest her.

It was the wardrobe woman who entered. She was an oldish woman with a dull face, very tired, for she had a thankless job.

"What is it?" the girl demanded. "What do you want?"

"Joe ain't very well," said the wardrobe woman.

"Why do you bother me about it?" retorted Leona pettishly. "What have I got to do with it?"

"I didn't know who else to go to," was the answer. "I couldn't find Mr. Behren anywhere."

"What's the matter with the kid?" the girl asked.

"Dopey," said the woman. "Been dopey all day."

"That's nothing," returned Leona, trying to reassure not the wardrobe woman but herself. "I'm dopey. You're dopey. We all are. It's the weather. Give him a—a—whatever it is they give kids that age to brace 'em up."

The wardrobe woman appeared in no haste to act upon this helpful advice. She remained stolidly where she was.

"He ought to have the doctor," she said in her inflectionless voice.

At that Leona paled. Doctors were professional alarmists. Caution was their trade. Should a doctor be consulted, ten to one he would take it into his head to give some preposterous order, such as Joe's non-appearance that night. And the child used as an understudy acted and looked like a kewpie.

"He can have a doctor to-morrow," she said decisively. "It's too late this afternoon."

"It's only five o'clock," persisted the woman. "He's in bed yet. I don't want to be blamed if he takes cold or anything."

At these words the million venomous serpents of Leona's separate selfishnesses reared their heads as one. There was a conspiracy afoot to thwart her by sentimentalizing over this child—a child out of the gutter, a nobody who could jolly well thank his stars that he wasn't starving. It was ridiculous to pamper him like this, interfering with the delicate psychology of her public by threatening to shut the doors of the theater in its face at the last minute—and for what? Because Master Joe, forsooth, chose to have a pain in his stomach from overfeeding, or a diminution of vitality on account of the heat.

"He won't need any doctor in the morning," she declared. "He'll be as fit as a fiddle by then. Go right back this minute and get him up. I'll be responsible."

"Seems to me you're taking a good deal on yourself," the woman objected.

Leona stamped her foot.

"Mind your own business," she threatened, "or I'll have you fired! Do as you're told!"

Effectually silenced, the woman went out and closed the door.

When Leona arrived at the theater three hours later the first thing she did was to inquire whether the kid was on hand. Informed that he was, she dressed hurriedly, determined to silence her compunctions by petting and encouraging him—an unheard-of condescension—before the performance should begin. She hastened toward his tiny cubicle, and peeping round the corner of the half-open door called out roguishly, "Where's Joe?"

Then her heart stood still.

In a corner the wardrobe woman was seated upon a trunk, the little boy quiescent in her arms. She was neither caressing him nor speaking to him—just holding him there.

"What is it?" cried Leona with a scared intake of breath.

The wardrobe woman did not look up. "You know well enough what it is," she replied in her accusing, monotonous tone.

"Joe's got a headache," complained the child. "He's got—the awfulest headache that ever was."

He had forgotten his grudge against her. He was sick, and she was visiting him; that was all he cared about.

For an instant Leona hesitated. Then she said in peremptory tones to the wardrobe woman, "They're looking for you outside. Put him down and go. I'll take charge of him. Leave him to me."

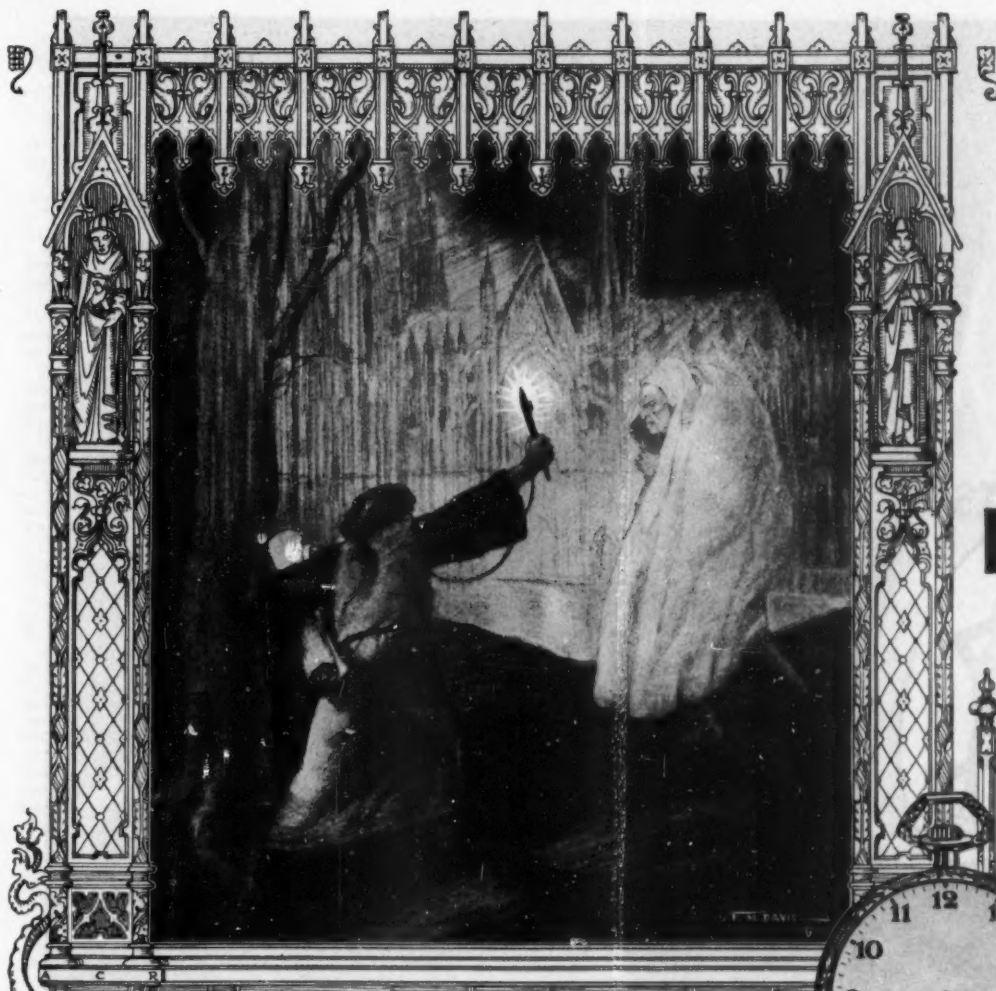
The woman obeyed. In passing she cast upon the star a look equally compounded of suspicion, resentment and hate.

Joe did not much like being left alone with Leona. She was not to be counted upon, for she was never twice the same. Her present aspect was unfamiliar to him. There was trace in it neither of the fury of yesterday nor of the playfulness of five minutes ago. He did not know where he stood.

"Come here!" she commanded; and, baby though he was, he was no longer in doubt. He came at once. "You've got to go through with this," she continued, speaking dispassionately, slowly and distinctly. "Do you understand?"

He put out a grieved lower lip.

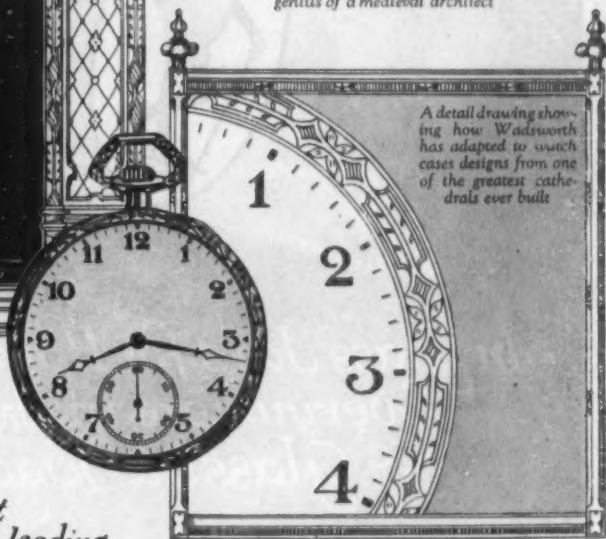
(Continued on Page 45)



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A detail drawing showing how Wadsworth has adapted to watch cases designs from one of the greatest cathedrals ever built

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And Satan answered, "I only ask for your soul. Tomorrow at midnight . . . I will bring you the plan and the pact that you must sign."

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(Continued from Page 42)

"Joe's got such a headache!" he reiterated in his little, soft, pleading voice. "I know all about your headache," she returned. "You've got to go through with it, just the same."

When he began to whimper she stopped him short by merely saying, "None of that!"

Then he put the child's inevitable question, "Why does Joe have to?"

"Because I say so," she answered, her face adamant.

He protested no more. He had learned during the last twenty-four hours that life could be hard for little boys.

The curtain went up on time. Leona, apprehensive lest she should cease to be able to dominate the situation, soon perceived that her fears were groundless.

At Joe's first signs of listlessness she whispered warningly, "Wake up, there, kid! Do you get me? Put some ginger into it! Mind what I say!"

After that there was no more trouble. Joe seemed fully roused. With cheeks too hot and eyes too bright, he far outstripped in excellence his performance of the night before. Leona's picture of adoring motherhood, too, was particularly convincing. So accurate was the copy that no one but an expert could have detected its fraudulence. The child's energies, once awakened, seemed to gather momentum as the evening wore on. Her father overplayed than underplayed his part.

Any exaggeration, however, was transmitted to the audience only as an accentuation of his subtle personal charm. The habitual fault of his acting—if it had a fault—was that it was too light. It did not always get across. It had a quality elfin, or angelic, or both, like his white-gold hair that a breeze might have lifted off and blown away; like himself, about whom even in health hovered a suggestion of otherworldliness.

To-night it was he who was taking the house by storm. This did not at all suit Leona. Yet she dared not check him, for she realized that he was under the influence of some stimulus over which he had no control. He had lost his gauge. He was abnormal—feverish probably. Her best policy was to let him alone.

Between the acts she vented her annoyance upon everybody in sight. The colored maid, who had not a nerve in her body, cried and gave notice three times.

Furiously jealous, Leona led Joe out after the final curtain again, again and again. Then as she stood in the wings she heard them calling his name as insistently as before. They wanted him without her. She knew it. She would have to give in to them. There was no escape. Beside himself with excitement, the little boy was disjunctly jumping up and down.

"Joe wants to go to the peoples!" he insisted in a shrill, unnatural voice. "Don't you hear the peoples calling him?"

He tugged at her sleeve. Brutally she released it, but he picked at it again.

"Let them call!" she snapped. "You'll go when I get ready to send you! Not before!"

"Joe wants to go to the peoples!" he repeated with unshadowed face.

This reiteration was irritating beyond endurance.

"Joe wants to go!" she mocked in a shrill squeak, utterly dissimilar to the tone it purported to imitate. "Keep right on, why don't you? Say it again!"

He inclined his head vaguely.

"Joe wants —"

His voice trailed off; his clambering fingers relaxed; his eyes wandered, their luster suddenly filmed.

The clamor from without was becoming louder; from all parts of the house at once resounded cries of "Joe!" "Joe!" "Joe!"

Leona pushed him forward.

"Oh, go on then!" she said petulantly.

He went slowly, as though walking in his sleep. Another moment and her senses were bruised by the thunder and the shouting of a veritable ovation in his behalf. It was as discordant to her as the blare of a brass band with every instrument out of tune. It set all her nerves on edge. She clutched at her temples with both hands to keep the top of her head from coming off, and no sooner had she done so than a portentous stillness fell upon her taut eardrums, not negative, but positive in its relief from a pressure that had amounted to physical pain. She did not seek the cause until new sounds became audible, not concerted, but traveling in cross currents;

murmurs of consternation, bewilderment, compassion, brought to a focus at length by the horrified exclamation of a woman, "Oh, the poor little fellow!" and the practiced inquiry in a man's deeper tones, "Is there a doctor in the house?"

To which succeeded almost immediately the staccato answer, "Right here!"

Leona felt impelled to discover for herself what had happened, but all the symptoms of nightmare held her bound hand and foot, the imponderable shackles upon arms and legs, the morbid vacillations, the smothering sensation that made every breath a separate agony. It must be Joe they wanted a doctor for; he must have had some sort of collapse. Oh, how could she have bullied him into going on when he was not able! How perfectly rotten she was!

In a series of blinding flash-backs she relived every discreditable episode of her life, culminating in this, that surpassed them all for sheer heartlessness and depravity.

A scene shifter came running toward her from the wings and broke the spell.

"It's the kid!" he panted. "I'm going for water! He come out and stood there, dazed-like, and never took a mite o' notice o' the clapping. All at once he just threw up his hands and dropped."

Leona saved herself from falling by grabbing one of the flies.

"Curtain! Curtain!" she heard shouted.

It seemed hours, but was probably less than two minutes. Then the curtain was lifted with a jerk, disclosing before the footlights a kneeling figure surrounded by a mixed crowd. The house was half standing, half sitting, with people grouped in the aisles. There was a confusion of sounds—broken by strange hushes. Behren appeared from the box office—in his shirt sleeves—uttering oaths and lamentations. He pushed through the bunch and likewise dropped on his knees. Nobody paid the slightest attention to Leona. The stage manager shoved her ignominiously to one side. Then the man who had been kneeling lifted Joe's limp form in his arms. Behren thrust back such of the audience as had scrambled upon the stage and the curtain fell again.

"Is he—dead?" faltered Leona, timidly approaching.

"No more dead than you are!" shot back the doctor. "He's had a bad knock-out, though! He won't come to! I must get him to the hospital at once!"

"Shall I call an ambulance?"

"Oh, no, I'll carry him! It's quicker."

He disposed the little figure in his arms as comfortably as he could. Some of the child's gossamer hairs hung caught upon the rough serge of his coat sleeve. In the crook of his elbow the fair head was lying back. A swift pulse underneath the strained, alabaster skin of the throat corroborated the assertion he had made that life was there. Joe was safe at last, poor baby—safe from the machinations of the unscrupulous, safe from herself! She had never heard of Saint Christopher, yet when she looked up at those two a tremor of awe crept up her back from the end of her spine to her neck. Hysterically she dragged Harson toward the stage entrance.

"Where's his mother?" asked the doctor suddenly.

"He—lost her," faltered Leona. Harson looked down at the child's forehead with its delicate tracery of blue veins, and then with a puzzled frown at Leona. Was she hiding something?

"Poor little chap!" he muttered. Then looking the girl full in the eyes, he said, "You'll have to do then? Come along!"

"If"—she stammered—"if you want me to!"

"Come!" he repeated.

Fortunately the hospital—a crass structure of painted brick—was only three blocks off.

The doctor and the hell cat entered its doors together. A nurse in a print frock and billowy hair removed Joe deftly from Harson's arms and placed him with extreme care upon a stretcher which an orderly had wheeled up. Then the orderly, who was in white, with white shoes, wheeled him along a corridor to a room marked "Emergency Cases" in black lettering upon the ground-glass upper pane of a door. The doctor, the nurse and the orderly went in. They forgot all about Leona, who remained alone outside, like a child who has been sent out of the room. In the half hour that ensued she suffered acutely for the first time. Even the telegram about Ruff's death hadn't hurt her much.

Then after she had heard the burial service read over Joe a half dozen times there was a movement inside the opaque glass, the knob rattled, the door opened and they wheeled him out again. Leona involuntarily relieved her concentrated agony by a moan rising into a wail.

"Shut up!" ejaculated the orderly.

"Who let you stay here?"

But her outcry had not disturbed the child, who was lying motionless upon his pillows, lids closed.

"She can stay!" said Harson. Along interminable passages wound the cortege, the little white stretcher in its midst. At length the orderly wheeled it into an elevator and shot them all upward three flights, after which they proceeded along a tiled passage revealing through an open door at the end a double row of cots. At sight of this, their destination, Leona laid an arresting hand upon the doctor's arm.

"Please, not there!" she whispered. "Aren't there any private rooms?"

"Certainly there are," he answered laconically—"only I thought —"

"I'll stand for everything," she interrupted with an eager glint in her yellow eyes. "Charge it up to me."

The look of appreciation with which he received this offer made her spirit quail. Had he not created a diversion just at that point by a change of orders to the attendants, she thought she must have died of shame. When the stretcher turned in the opposite direction she dropped a little behind to be rid of the discomfiture of his presence. But there was no escape for her. He, too, slackened his pace. Once more they were walking side by side.

"I knew," he began rather shyly, "as soon as I saw you together what the relation was."

Poor Leona was not quick at interpretation of another's thought.

"I'm not related to him," was her literal reply.

"I didn't mean that sort of relationship," he explained. "From the moment you came into that nursery in the play last night you stood for motherhood itself—to me."

This was more than Leona had bargained for. This was rubbing it in. She writhed like an insect on a pin. She wanted to show herself up before him—she wanted to tell him the truth. Why, she had no idea. But while she was struggling for speech the stretcher came to a halt before the door of the room assigned.

"Here we are, old man," said the doctor, turning from her.

At the sound of his voice the sick child lifted his heavy lids and smiled.

"Take Joe," he invited.

The doctor gathered him up. Another moment and he was tucking him into bed. Leona, leaning over his elbow, gazed apprehensively into the little face. Why were those cheeks so red? Was it possible that not all the rouge had been removed? She laid her finger tips against the skin. No such luck. It was burning. There was no escape for her from her horrible burden of guilt.

She was sick with envy of the others because they had not done what she had done. Should Joe die his blood would not be upon their heads, but upon hers. It was her hand that had struck him down. If the doctor knew, would he ever speak to her again?

The latter, who was always observing, whether he appeared to be or not, caught her anguished look at him, and was puzzled by it. She seemed to have something on her conscience. He connected it with the child—and with her past. He had guessed part of it, he thought. With a curious pang he wondered who Joe's father was.

"Anything more, sir?" asked the orderly in a businesslike manner.

"No, I think not," answered the doctor.

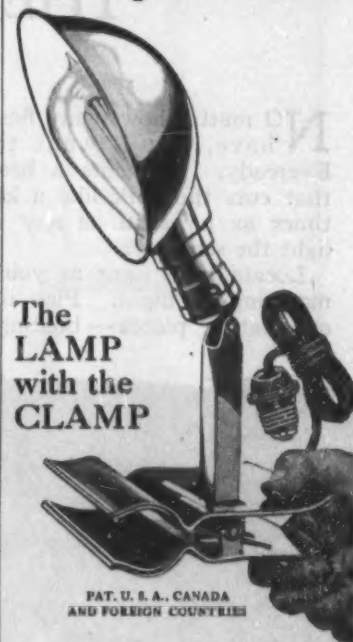
"If I need you I'll ring."

Leona stood shrinking against the white wall trying to make herself as inconspicuous as possible lest they should throw her out. There was every reason for dispensing with her presence—from their point of view. Naturally they did not associate her with crime—or expiation. Yet the prospect of being ejected filled her with pure terror; she could not face the possibility of having to endure these pangs of remorse alone.

When the doctor glanced in her direction therefore she implored, "I'll do anything you tell me—any of you—if you'll only let me stay!"

(Continued on Page 48)

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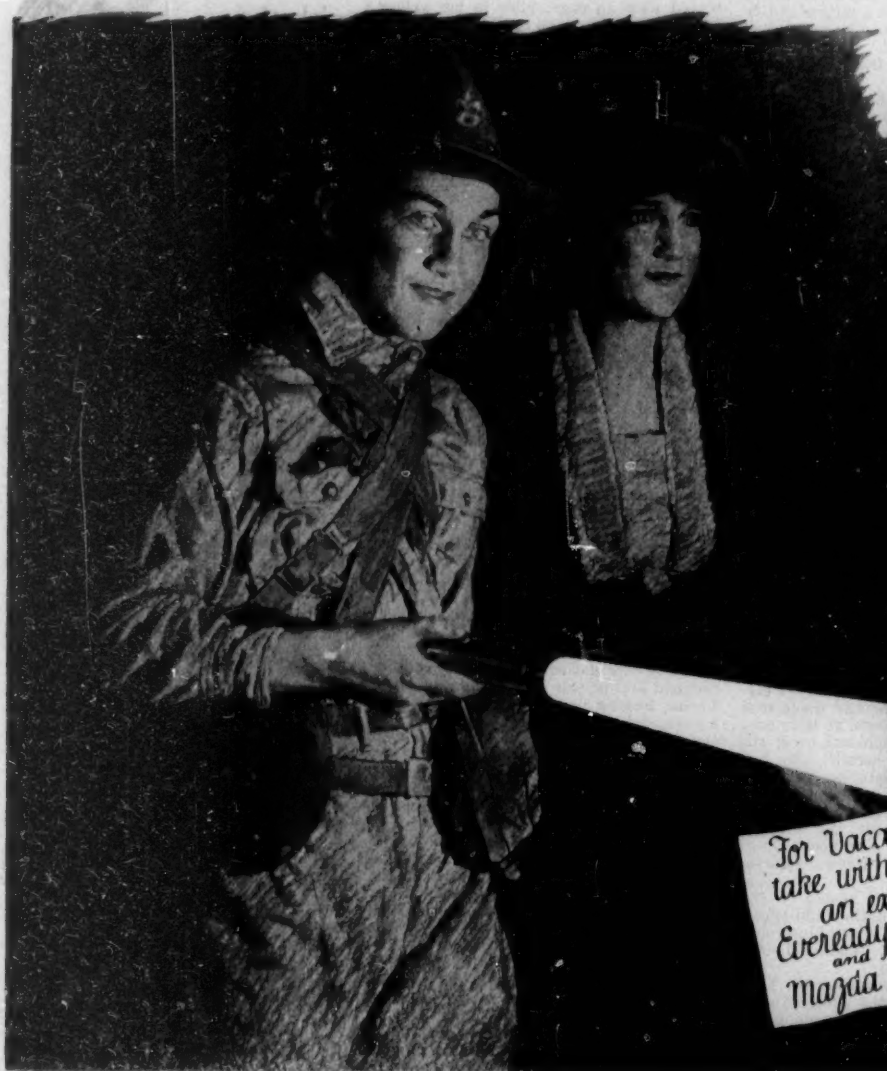
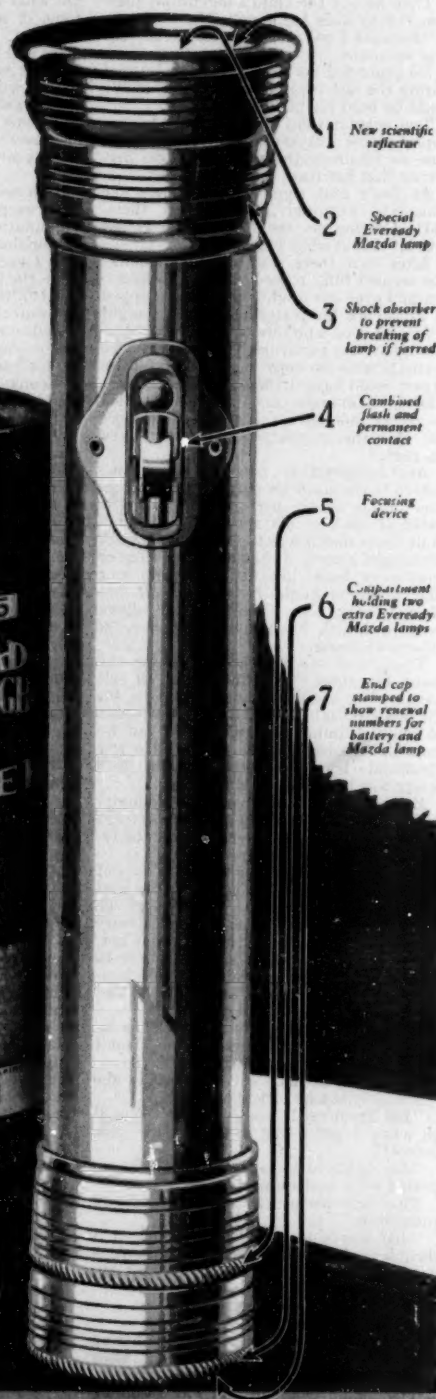
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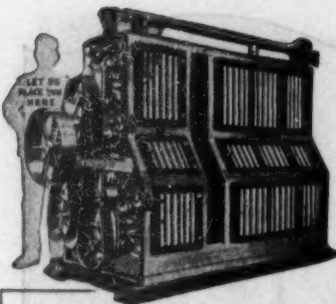
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(Continued from Page 48)

He inclined his head curtly. From that moment she worshiped him. The nurse shook down her clinical thermometer, its mercury flashing under the electric light. Leona was desperately jealous of her, not because she was pretty and had an oval face, but because she knew so exactly what to do, whereas the star herself under the present circumstances was the most bungling of amateurs. Joe had begun to breathe stertorously.

"Come over and watch him," ordered Harson. "Sit here." He drew up a chair for her. "It's double pneumonia," he continued, "and it's already affected his heart. That's why I want him watched. Don't take your eyes off his face!"

Giving her utmost, Leona sat watching hour after hour, until her eyeballs seemed to detach themselves and go floating off so that she could no longer use them to see with. The empty sockets throbbed like aching teeth. She could have borne the pain without the blindness, but both together were too much.

"Get up a minute and go to the window," she heard. "I'll relieve you."

It was the doctor's voice, of course—whose else? His eyes were in every place. He could do a hundred things at once. Gratefully she obeyed him, and through the gently belling curtains thirstily drank in whatever breath of air there was. Presently she felt better and came back.

"You were watching too well," he commented. "Learn to conserve your forces. Don't put out too much energy. Just enough."

After she had sat at a distance for a while, she ventured to draw her chair closer, and leaning her elbows cautiously upon the spread she cupped her chin in her hands. It soothed her to be so near Joe. He was very quiet. Perhaps he was not so ill as she had imagined. She grew sleepy. She seemed to be walking in a garden delicately scented with flowers. She nodded, came to her senses with a start and leaned far over the child. It was Joe who smelled like that, not flowers. They must have bathed him in the emergency room and changed his clothes. They always did that in hospitals. Only this had somehow become a nursery smell. She recognized it, though she had never smelled it before. It was exquisitely blended of the bath and talcum powder and clean flannel and all those other imponderable things that she had rejected without the quiver of an eyelid in rejecting motherhood. Turbulent emotions seethed in her, of whose very existence she had been heretofore unconscious. All her values were shifting like clouds upon a windy day. She threw the entire heap of her past triumphs into the balance against one of Joe's smiles, and the smile won. No thirst for glory that she had ever experienced was comparable to her longing that he should open his eyes and look upon her without fear. But he lay still and gave no sign.

Quietly she crept back to her chair and resumed her watch. She dared not lose herself again. Hour succeeded hour, and Joe did not move. Suddenly, at about three o'clock in the morning, he flung his arms crosswise in a startlingly familiar gesture, tiny padded palms up. To Leona, half hypnotized by her long vigil, this was the climax of the play, and her outcry was automatically couched in its familiar lines—"Oh, my little boy, my son, my little son, my child!"

Then, when the doctor and the nurse came running, she realized where she was. The doctor found time to look at her as she bent over the cot, tearing at its occupant with her eyes.

He had seen that look—twice. This was the third time. The other two had been on the stage.

"Save him!" she ejaculated hoarsely. "Save him, for God's sake! You don't know—everything! You don't know!"

"I do!" he returned sharply, ripping off his coat and flinging it on a chair. "Didn't I hear what you called him? Don't lose your nerve—we'll pull him through!"

At this assurance hope rose in her; her face flamed, her eyes sparkled, she was all but deafened by the exultant throb of all her pulses at once. Joe was going to be saved by this fellow in shirt sleeves, armed with his oxygen tank and his technical skill!

"Lift his head," the doctor ordered, and she clung to his face with her eyes as she obeyed.

The warmth of Joe's thin little neck at the back, where it met the thickened down of the hair, sent an electric thrill through her fingers. Heat meant life.

As her confidence rose the doctor's ebbed. He cursed himself for his presumption. Suppose he should not be able to make good? Joe's color was bad. A gray shadow was stealing ominously across the little face. The lips were blue. Should he warn Leona, and put out that light in her eyes? He could not! Besides, it was unprofessional to quail like this. While there was life—

At last Joe stirred. His breath, like a snowflake, fluttered earthward from mysterious heights. He lifted an eyelid. He clenched a fist. He sighed.

"Joe!" sobbed Leona. "My baby! Oh, Joe!" Tears coursed down her face unchecked, leaving tracks upon the paint.

The child turned a grave stare upon her. Then he showed a slowly dawning recognition, and scowled.

"Go way!" he muttered suspiciously, in a weak echo of his sweet little flutelike voice. "Joe don't want any chocolates. Naughty Leona! Go way!"

Leona hid her face in her hands. "She's not naughty," said the doctor quietly. "She's good."

"You've hurt her feelings," added the nurse reproachfully. "You've made her cry."

Joe protruded a lower lip. "Are you really and truly crying, Leona?" he asked anxiously. "Take your hands away."

Leona lowered them. How she had hurt him—and how he hated to hurt!

"I was fooling, Joe," she said with a little break in her voice. "I'm really laughing! Look!"

She got the smile she had longed for so hotly; the wide look without fear. For Joe was as affectionate as a puppy. Besides, memory does not much aid resentment at five.

"Joe wants Leona to stay with him all this night," the child murmured. "Where's Leona's hand?"

He fell into a profound slumber, holding it. Presently the nurse left the room. It was the natural moment for Leona to speak.

"Doctor," she said simply.

He came at once to her side. "I'm not his mother," she continued. "You've got me wrong." Then, with a hungry look at the little boy, "Oh, how I wish I was! I've been married," she went on, "but I've never had a child. I hated children. I wouldn't have one when Ruff wanted me to. Ruff was my husband—Ruff Tower. He's dead. We were in the chorus of The Jolly Wives. We did a dance together. I chuckled him when the company broke up."

During the pause that followed Ruff was very vividly in her mind. Inconsequential, undervalued young shrimp of a chorus boy that he had been at that period, with his wasp waist, his unwholesome pallor, his plastered hair brushed high off his temples, his receding chin! Yet there were deep currents in him somewhere, since he had desired fatherhood. She might have made something of him, had she chosen. She had not chosen. She had been a bad wife to him; in fact no wife. Now he was lying far away in a foreign land, his grave marked by a white little wooden cross.

"When did he die?" asked Rhodes Harson.

"At Belleau Wood," she replied.

"Poor lad!" said the doctor.

He knew the type. During his two years of hospital work behind the lines he had seen many a mechanical toy of Ruff's stamp come to life and die manfully, to his everlasting honor, uncompaining and unafraid.

Leona was looking down at Joe again.

"If he was only mine!" she said covetously. "If what you thought was only true!"

The doctor laid his hand upon Leona's as it rested on the bed.

"Your not being his mother makes your love for him all the more astounding," he declared. "The thing's tremendous! It takes one's breath away. It got across to me over the footlights the very minute you came on the stage. I told the chap who was with me that there was something—there. I didn't care a rap whether it was a blood relationship or not. The thing that mattered was the thing itself."

She shook her head blankly.

"There wasn't anything—then," she declared. "I was bored to death with the kid. I was only acting a part."

"It was there all the same!" he cried excitedly. "I knew it, even if you didn't! If you want proof—look at what he means to you now!"

"There's a reason," she answered very low. "I've been waiting for a chance to tell you all night. When you've heard it you'll probably call the acquaintance off."

"Why tell me then?" he demanded.

"I don't know, I'm sure," she returned slowly. "All I know is that I'll smother if I don't get it off my chest. So here goes: You thought I was just crazy about Joe, didn't you? Well, you wouldn't treat a kitten as mean as I treated him yesterday. He was sick all day, see? The wardrobe woman told me in the afternoon. She thinks the world of him. I knew well enough I ought to get a doctor to look him over, but I wouldn't for fear the understudy'd have to take his place. We'd made a hit the first night, and I wanted to go on with it."

"There wasn't anything real about him to me; he was just part of the show. Of course, I didn't know he was as sick as all that, but I took a chance. I was afraid when I saw him at the theater, but it was too late then, I told myself, to call the show off. So I bullied him into going on with it. I'd scared him once when I'd got mad at him, and I knew I could scare him again. I gritted my teeth and made him play. Then when he did better than I wanted him to I could have stuck a knife into him, I was so jealous. That's the kind of a girl I am. Now you know."

In the silence that ensued no sound save the little boy's light and regular breathing was to be heard. Leona did not look up.

At length the doctor said deliberately, "Why do you stop there?"

"How do you mean?" she asked in confusion.

"Why don't you go on," he continued, "and tell the rest of the story?"

"You know the rest," she answered simply. "There's no use my going into all that again."

"No use," he took her up, his voice vibrating with intense emotion, "in telling me what sort of woman you actually are, because—because I know! I've seen! That girl in the play was the real you. The real you hadn't been brought out by life. It took a sudden thing like this collapse of Joe's to make you know yourself. You showed up in your emergency just as Ruff did under fire."

"Ruff was better than me," she said humbly.

By way of answer Harson lifted her hand—the hand with the shining, pointed finger nails—to his lips.

At ten o'clock in the morning, when Behren made his appearance, they were still beside the cot. The producer had been notified that the child was out of danger and wanted to find out definitely when Joe could be expected to resume his place in the cast.

"Well, how soon is it?" he demanded finally, refusing to be stalled. "Why don't you give me some satisfaction? When's the kid going to be able to go on?"

"Not for two weeks," replied Harson positively.

Behren was dismayed, but since Joe was a gold mine he was really no more willing to take chances than the physician himself.

"You're the doctor," he conceded ruefully. "Anyhow," he calculated, "he can meet us at Peoria next Wednesday week. That ain't so terrible. The understudy is good enough for these hick towns. He don't need to be handled with gloves like Joe here, Leona—he's different."

Leona's eyes flashed.

"You want me to bully him for you, do you?" she retorted. "Well then, I won't!"

"Who said anything about bullying?" he protested innocently. "I only want you to rehearse him a little to help us out."

"I won't!"

"You won't, you won't, always you won't! If it's not one thing it's another you won't do!"

"I won't put anything over on another child so long as I live!"

"I've stood enough from you!" he shouted angrily. "You drive me too far!"

But he knew, and she knew that he knew, she could drive him a long way farther; insult and browbeat him, as long as she meant money to him, to her heart's content. She turned to observe Joe, who was still drugged with sleep, arms and legs sprawling, every bit of him comfortable and relaxed.

"Is that what I pay you for?" Behren grumbled on. "For sitting and mooning over him?"

(Continued on Page 51)



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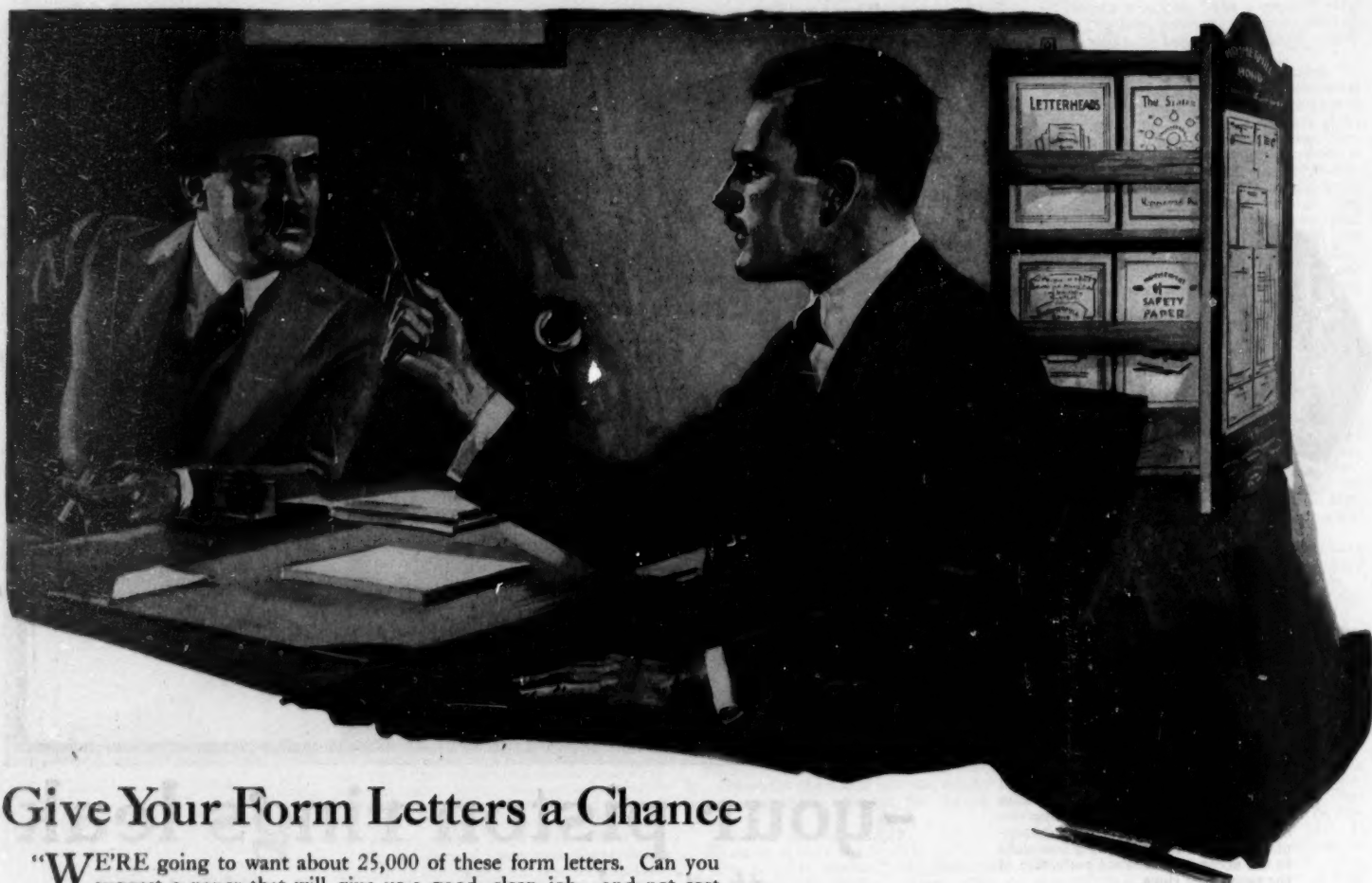


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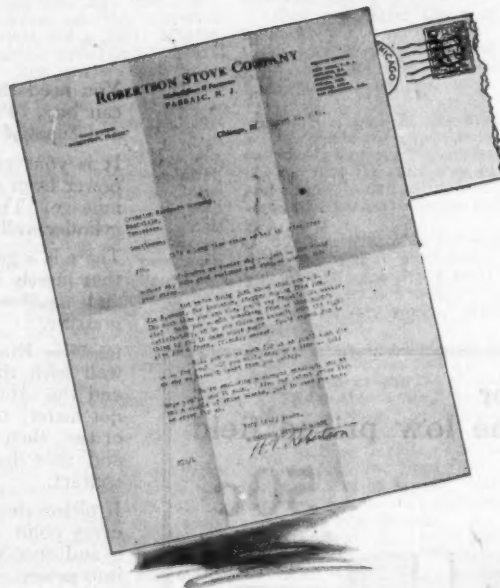
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(Continued from Page 48)

But Leona did not retort in her habitual pert fashion. She did not even move her head. What was the matter with her? There was something more than suspicious in her silence. He had not meant to offend her—merely to quarrel with her, according to their regular method of intercourse.

"Oh, have it your own way!" he hastened to say apologetically. "I'll run back and order a little breakfast for you, eh? Some hot coffee and eggs?"

At that she lifted her head very deliberately and looked him full in the eyes. Even before she spoke he perceived that the Behren's Productions Company had lost Leona Lowrie.

"I'm not going back to the hotel, Morris," she said quietly. "I'm out of the cast for good!"

Behren turned white with rage, but kept his grip on himself.

"Stop bluffing, Leona! Cut out the fireworks! You can stay here with the kid if you want to. I can see you like him. I'm reasonable! Meet us at Peoria then," he temporized. "Hang round here till he gets well enough to travel, and then bring him along!"

"He's not going to Peoria," she answered. "I'm taking him to Palm Beach to play in the sand."

"You don't know what you're talking about!" cried Behren. "You're all upset, poor girl, awake all night! I go now, and we continue this later, when you're slept out."

It was a forlorn hope, and he knew it as well as anybody as he beat a hasty retreat.

"Why are you leaving the stage, Miss Lowrie?" asked Rhodes Harson.

"To take care of Joe," she answered.

"They'll let me have him, I guess. He's got nobody else. He'd only be knocking round. I thought maybe I could make it up to him a little bit."

"But your career?"

She laughed and snapped her fingers.

"That—for my career!" she said.

"I'll adopt him," said the doctor. "That is—if you'll marry me."

"What?" she cried, shrinking, wide-eyed and white. "Do you mean that straight? I beg your pardon. Of course you do mean it straight. Everything's straight that you've got anything to do with. Well,

then forget it! You've only known me a few hours. You're all worked up."

"I've known you a lifetime!" he said fervently. "A lot of concentrated living can be done in a night like this."

"I never believed," she said slowly, "that there were any men like you."

"Joe'd think it was grand to have a father, I bet," she continued wistfully. "It'd be a regular little family, wouldn't it? A father, a mother and a kid."

"It is a family!" he cried. "We three have been thrown together, and if you say so, we'll stick!"

The increasing volume of the sound of their voices had disturbed the little boy.

"Where's anybody's hand?" he demanded plaintively.

"Here, hon," said Leona.

"Here, son," said Rhodes Harson.

Joe clasped the two hands impartially, the slim white one and the strong brown.

Leona stood up, and leaning toward the young man across the cot she lifted her face to his.

There was something in the way she did it that reminded him of Joe when he put out his arms.

JASON AND THE FLEECE

(Continued from Page 24)

a lot of money in the bank and the prospect of a good big income every year; and I won't have to stay here working either. I can just turn everything over to the agent and let him send me the profits. We'll be able to live in New York and comfort for the rest of our days.

"By the way, there was one thing that puzzled me in your last letter. You said something about coming to join me out here in the West. Were you only joking, or did you think that perhaps I should never be able to support my wife in New York—in New York which we both love so much and where we both want to live?"

At this point Vivienne laid down the letter and said "Oh!"

"Oh what, dearie?" asked Aunt Mabel.

"Oh nothing," said Vivienne vaguely. But she added: "Something Jason says I don't quite understand. He doesn't seem to want to live on the ranch after we're married. He wants to come back to New York—this loathsome city!"

"Jason's learning sense out West," declared Aunt Mabel. "Nobody wants to live in Idaho."

"It's not Idaho—it's Montana," Vivienne reminded her absently.

"Well, Montana. It's the same thing—Indians and no plumbing."

"Nothing could be worse than New York," said Vivienne. "How I hate this place!" And she shuddered artistically with the aid of her lovely shoulders. Then she continued in the crooning monotone that emotional actresses employ when they are supposed to be seeing visions and dreaming dreams.

"I had visioned our home," she said. "I have seen it so often in my mind. The little gray farmhouse with a garden and window boxes. And outside and around us the wide, wide prairies, with the cattle lowing contentedly as they graze. And in the evenings the big open fire blazing on the hearth, with my boy and me beside it—just the two of us—side by side. And the wind whistling in the black pines. He reading or working and I busy by the lamp with my sewing—my sewing—for the little one yet unborn."

"Vivienne," interrupted Aunt Mabel. "I'm worried about you, the way you go on. You don't act natural at all. You act just like you was playing a part. Fire on the hearth—wind in the pines—little one unborn! Don't you feel well, dearie? There's some calomel—"

"Shut up!" cried Vivienne angrily. "You're simply too coarse to understand. You've been spoiled by this—this sordid New York life. You don't seem to think anyone can be simple and honest and straight."

"That's the trouble with New York—it rots away your moral fiber. It starves your heart and kills your soul."

"Now, dearie, don't take on so. You must have heard all that in church last Sunday. I told you if you went to church you'd be upset. You oughtn't to take up new things like that."

"I oughtn't to, eh? Well, I'm going to! I'm going to go to church every single Sunday. And," she added with a sob, "I'm

going to get married and live on a farm and keep chickens. And you can go to the devil for all I care!"

"Oh, oh, oh!" said Aunt Mabel. "There she goes crying! Spoiling her pretty eyes and streaking her pretty face. Come, dearie, come to your Aunt Mabel."

Vivienne came to her Aunt Mabel, flung herself into her arms and cried in her lap. And her tears were sincere, even as she herself, in spite of her stage phrases, was sincere. A real and definite change had come over her character, and she was actually disgusted with the New York that she knew and the life that she had been accustomed to enjoy.

Aunt Mabel soothed her and petted her back to comparative calm, and then, to complete the cure, rose and procured a bottle of brandy from the mission cellaret.

"There's just a nip left of all that Mr. Powell sent you," she observed. "But it's enough for two drinks, and he ought to be back soon now."

They drank what remained of Mr. Powell's gift, Vivienne contributing a snuffle to each swallow; and both of them felt the better for it. Nevertheless, Aunt Mabel was worried. She had often witnessed Vivienne indulge in prima donna outbursts, but never before had she seen her niece in the throes of what approached religious hysteria. It was not so much the churchgoing that disturbed Aunt Mabel. It was rather this insistence on the simple life; this avowed intention of throwing over her stage career, with all its opportunities, in order to marry a penniless man, live on some barbaric farm and raise chickens and children. Aunt Mabel shuddered at the very thought of it. It was abnormal, it was insane, it was—well, almost indecent. And Vivienne Vincent of all people! With that voice and those legs!

Then, too, there was that nice, rich Mr. Powell, who had lately been so very attentive; who, indeed, had provided them with the brandy. If Vivienne wanted to marry, why did she not select Amos Powell? He had plenty of money, was fat and good-natured, exceedingly generous and obviously adored Vivienne. Recently he had gone West on some business or other, but he had promised to be back soon. And during his absence he had given Vivienne the entire use of his limousine. That was nice of him. Aunt Mabel so disliked street cars. Well, Vivienne certainly was an incomprehensible, silly child.

To Aunt Mabel's relief, Mr. Powell returned to New York about a week later. Vivienne's musical show had been taken off for the summer, so that her time was her own, and Mr. Powell forthwith proceeded to make a great part of it his. She did not know very much about Mr. Powell—had met him only recently—but she gathered vaguely that he had an office downtown and was engaged in high finance.

At any rate Mr. Powell was assiduous. Orchids preceded him, and occasionally gifts a little less evanescent—a vanity case, a cigarette holder, a really very nice sapphire-and-diamond bracelet which, as he explained, he had just happened to see in the window and couldn't help buying;

and which, as she explained to Aunt Mabel, she just couldn't help accepting.

"I should hope not!" Aunt Mabel assured her.

The first evening after his return to New York Mr. Powell took her in his limousine to dine at a restaurant up the Hudson—a quiet dinner, with a quiet drive to and from it. Mr. Powell was respectful.

But at dinner—she had called him Amos for the first time at dinner—he had startled her.

"Do you know what took me West on this trip?" he asked in his pleasant, hearty voice, with his paternal—almost paternal—smile—it was a pity he had so much gold in his teeth.

"No," said she brightly. "Business, I suppose, and I don't know anything about business."

"Guess again," said he with a shake of his head.

"I'm sure I don't know. What?"

He sat back in his chair, selected a big cigar from his case and lit it. Then he leaned toward her and said in a low, confidential tone: "Not business—just the opposite. I'm planning to get out of business. Made my pile, and now I'm going to quit—clear out—shake the dust of New York from my feet. You won't believe me, but I'm sick of this city and everything in it—everything in it except one thing."

She looked quickly down at the table, for that last sentence had a familiar ring to it. She knew very well that, properly answered, it would lead to more.

"But," she asked, "what do you plan to do when—when you haven't anything more to do?"

"That's just it," he said impressively. "That's just why I went West. You see"—he settled himself back for the recital of the story of his life which all men love to tell a woman—"you see, I came to New York from nowhere. No money—just a young kid drifting in the world. No friends—nothing. I worked. I'll say I worked! Day and night! Well, I'm worth to-day about two millions."

"Oh," she cried as he paused for approbation, "how wonderful! How really wonderful of you!"

He laughed.

"I wouldn't exactly say that," he disclaimed. "Still, it's a sign I didn't let the grass grow under my feet; that's just the trouble, I guess. I was so busy I forgot to make friends. Upsher—he's my partner, but—well, he's not exactly a friend. We're a different breed of cats, Upsher and me. And I haven't knocked around in society—I don't know any of the first families. Guess I don't want to either. But just the same, I'm getting along in years and it's lonely work."

"Yes," she agreed with a sympathetic sigh—"yes, I know. But you haven't told me yet why you went West."

"Coming to that, I've got, you see, so I hate New York—hate everything about it—the rushing round—the noise—the graft—oh, well, you know—everyone trying to get his foot on the neck of the next man. So I'm going to get out of New York

(Continued on Page 54)



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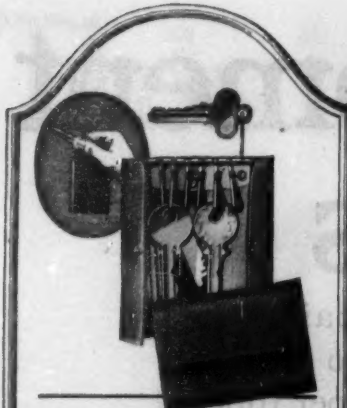
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(Continued from Page 51)

and live where it's quiet—and that's why I went West. I went to pick out a home for myself."

"Oh," she whispered. And then, forgetting caution, she could not resist adding, "But won't you be lonely?"

He swallowed hard twice. "Yes, that's just it," he said hoarsely. "That's why I want you to marry me and—keep away the loneliness."

"Mr. Powell!" she cried.

"Amos—Amos," he reminded her.

"Amos, I mean. This is very—unexpected. I had no idea! I shouldn't have let you!"

He shook his head, smiling silently at her. Then he said: "Don't be in a hurry, dear. Just take your time and let it sink in. And let me tell you more about my plans before you make up your mind one way or the other. Upsher and I scoured round out the whole lot—mostly in Montana. Upsher's health's gone back on him, and he's got to quit whether he wants to or not. So we thought we'd do it together. Only I got to thinking a good deal, and somehow the idea of settling down for life with Upsher didn't exactly appeal to me much. I got to thinking about you—thinking about you all the time. And just about the time I located Gray's ranch I knew that if I was going to have a home before I died you were the person to share it with me. Then I saw Gray's ranch, and it just seemed to fill the bill—only Gray wouldn't sell. Thought there was oil on it or something."

"Gray?" she interrupted. "What Gray?"

"Young Jason Gray—young fellow from New York out there raising mules."

"Jason Gray?" she repeated. "Why—not Jason Gray?"

It was with great difficulty that she refrained from crying out that she was engaged to marry him. Some instinct warned her not to burn her bridges. It would be well, perhaps, to hear more, and certainly there was no disloyalty to Jason in desiring to learn all she could about his prospects. Moreover, his latest letter had not been wholly satisfactory. There were things, she felt, that needed explaining; and Amos Powell, if left free to talk, would undoubtedly talk.

No, in no circumstances must she say anything that would compel him to be reticent. Later, of course—

"Yes," she said, "I know Jason Gray. I know him very well—a nice boy."

"Oh, sure he's a nice boy! But I'm afraid he's in for a heavy jolt. He thinks he's got oil on his ranch. That's why he wouldn't sell out at any price to me and Upsher. Well, he's mistaken. At least Upsher says he's mistaken, and Upsher's a pretty keen hand at spotting oil. It's his business—that's why he's my partner. To tell the truth, Upsher was looking for oil everywhere we went, and in some parts of that country he found likely enough looking oil land, but not on Gray's ranch. Not a sign. So you see young Gray's going to get a big disappointment, and meanwhile I get a big disappointment because that place of his is just what I want for my home."

"I see," said Vivienne. "Why didn't you tell Jason that there wasn't any oil on his land?"

Amos laughed a little.

"Why, my child, if I'd done that he'd been all the surer that there was. No, there's only one thing to do—wait until he finds out for himself. That won't be long. And meanwhile I haven't got my wife. I'm waiting for her, too, remember."

He reached out to take her hand under the table; gave it a comforting, friendly pat and released it.

"You dear girl," he said softly, and there was something very likable about him; some touch of homely sincerity that Vivienne had not before noticed in him.

She found herself at a loss as to how she should answer. As a friend he was most desirable, and even as a prospective husband he was not at all repugnant. But she was loyal to Jason—she must not forget that for a moment. And poor Jason had this bitter disappointment about the oil in store for him. All the more, then, must she be loyal. Of a sudden her real decency asserted itself, and she rose, I think, to great heights.

"Amos," she said quietly, "I'm engaged to marry Jason Gray."

His expression of astonishment and chagrin would have been comic had it not been leavened with the dignity of pathos.

"I'm sorry," she said—"I'm very sorry, Amos, but I had to tell you the truth. I had to be honest with you, didn't I?"

"Uh-huh," he said—"that's right. You're decent—decent all the way through. Knew you were. Knew you were straight as a string. That's why it's harder to lose you."

They were both silent for a space, and then he sat up straight in his chair and said in a businesslike way: "Now, look here, Vivienne, we've got to put this boy of yours wise. We've got to convince him that there's no use counting on oil. Otherwise he's in to lose a lot of money. I don't know, of course"—he hesitated—"I don't know just how much he's prepared to lose; but—well, it's mighty expensive drilling for oil when there ain't any oil to drill for. He'd much better stick to his mules. Now, as I say, he wouldn't believe me if I swore myself blue in the face, but he'd believe you. He'd believe you if you put it to him right. Tell him exactly how it came out—that I told you all about it before I knew anything about him and you. See what I mean?"

She nodded.

"Yes," she said, "I see, and I think it's just fine of you. You're really wonderful—to take it the way you do. Jason hasn't hardly any money at all—only that ranch. His father cut him off. So it means an awful lot to Jason—the ranch, I mean, and what he's got to be able to make out of it. I'm waiting to marry him when he makes a success of it."

"Oh," said Powell, "I didn't realize he was as strapped as all that. But if that's so, why then he's simply got to make the thing go! It's—well, it's a little tough on me to lose both the wife and the home that I'd picked out, isn't it? Especially," he added ruefully, "when the wife goes out to live in that very same home. I suppose that's what you plan to do?"

"Yes," she said, "as soon as Jason can afford it I'm going out to be a farmer's wife. He thinks I want to live in New York, but I don't. Never! I'm so sorry, Amos, so sorry for you. It certainly does seem as if luck was hitting you pretty hard."

"Well, luck's been pretty good to me up to now. I guess it was just about my turn to get it in the neck. So don't you worry about me. You do all your worrying about young Gray. Forget about me, unless either you or him need a helping hand, and then remember me quick. And let me know once in a while how things are going—keep me up to date. You see, I'm interested."

"You're about the nicest man in the world," said Vivienne, and she put a small, heavily scented handkerchief to her eyes. It was actually needed.

MEANWHILE at Gray Forks the newly formed partnership of Gray & Tripler made marked progress. When Mary informed her father that she intended to invest her eight thousand dollars in a pedigreed jack and some brood mares for the ranch he raised quizzical, bushy eyebrows, reflected for a space and then said, "You might do worse. What are the conditions?"

"Ten per cent of the profits," said Mary promptly, "and none of the losses."

"How do you mean, none of the losses? Suppose a cyclone hits the ranch and wipes everything out clean. Who takes the loss then?"

"You're stupid," Mary explained patiently. "Don't you see what I mean? I contribute the jack and the mares to the ranch. Jason contributes the ranch and all the running expenses. Then we raise mules. I get ten per cent of what those mules sell for. If they sell for nothing I get nothing; but they can't sell for less than nothing, so I can't receive less than nothing in profits. My livestock can die. In that case I lose, but otherwise not. See?"

Tripler nodded.

"Yes, I see. It's a bargain worthy of your Scotch blood, Mary. Mr. Gray contributes a ranch worth—well, let's say forty-eight thousand dollars, to say nothing of the cash to keep it going, and you contribute eight thousand. Why, that's just about what it costs him a year for his operating expenses!"

"Father was right," said Jason with a grin—"that's exactly what he gives me per year as long as I stick on the ranch."

"Of course," said Tripler. "It's what I recommended—the minimum. Well, it's

up to you, Mr. Gray. I think Mary gets the best of it, but I'm not going to say any more. It's up to you—and to her."

"Then that's all agreed," Jason remarked. "Suppose we go shopping tomorrow, Mary, and get that jack. What's his name—Big Ike?"

"Mammoth Ike," Mary corrected him. "He's over fifteen hands."

"Oh," said Tripler, "so you're going to buy him, eh? Well, go to it! Only if I were you I'd have sold out kit and boodle to your two oil friends before it's too late and you find out there's no oil."

"Plenty of time to do that, Mr. Tripler, if we fail with the mules. Besides, I'm a mule man, not an oil speculator."

Tripler regarded him in a puzzled manner, as if he were unable quite to size up either his or his motives. But gradually there came into his eyes a light of humor—of humorous admiration.

"I'd like to know," he grumbled half to himself—"I'd like to know just what makes old Caleb Gray think that Jason's not like Caleb."

As a matter of fact, Jason was becoming in one way at least a great deal like Caleb—he was becoming obstinate. Now obstinacy, as Tripler himself had pointed out, may be either a quality or a defect, a virtue or a vice. Caleb had nourished it so long and assiduously that it might have been reasonably called in him a vice; his son Jason had acquired it so recently that in him it bade fair to be a virtue. In any case, Jason, a little to his surprise, found that from the day of the conversation recorded Tripler treated him with increased respect—a half amused, half admiring respect. So might sympathetic neighbors have regarded young David going forth to slay Goliath, equipped only with a sling and a pebble.

As for Mary, she suddenly ceased to sing the praises of life in the big cities, but instead applied herself to making life on the ranch both pleasant and profitable.

"New York," she explained to Jason, "can wait. Our business, for the present, lies right here; and if we don't make a go of it it will be because we haven't any more backbone than the jellyfish. If we haven't we might as well find out at once. There's no room in New York for spineless jellyfish. When we succeed, then, I, at any rate, am going to move on and conquer bigger worlds."

"You said it!" answered Jason. "Meanwhile let's pray every night for Mammoth Ike. May his tribe increase!"

Now, a strange thing about all these brave sentiments was that both Jason and Mary knew in the bottom of their respective hearts that they were not quite true, or at least that they were not all of the truth. There was something besides sheer desire to prove himself a competent mule breeder that had kept Jason from selling out to the oil men at a price which he, at least, thought would be enormous. Good prospective oil land, even though unproved, he figured, should bring him possibly one hundred dollars an acre. Well, multiply that by his six thousand acres, and he could go back immediately to Vivienne and New York—his two loves—with a comfortable sum in his pocket. An impudent imp whispered to him that a month ago he would have jumped at the opportunity. What, then, held him back now? Mary? Oh, no, of course not Mary! Perish the treasonable thought! He had a far better, a far more satisfactory reason than that. It was the will to prove that he was not of those who put the hand to the plow and then turn back. That was it. He was an iron man. He had started to raise mules, and by the heavens he would raise them! This explanation of his conduct stilled, temporarily at least, the insidious voice of the impudent imp.

And Mary? Well, Mary also heard the imp whispering to her that a month ago she would have urged Jason to sell out at the first opportunity. Indeed, only recently she had pointed out to him that Montana was no place and mule breeding no job for a man that amounted to anything. And now, behold, she was investing every cent she had in the world to enable Jason to continue in Montana and to continue encouraging the procreation of mules! Inconsistent? No, indeed! Circumstances had altered the case, and the desire that Jason remain had nothing to do with it. It was simply that she had now been given a splendid opportunity to invest in a business in which she could and would take an

(Continued on Page 57)



ORGANIZATION

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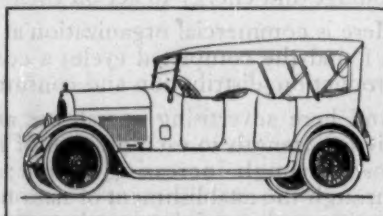
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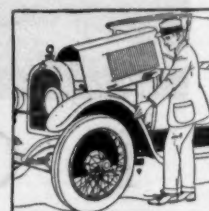
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MARMON 34

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(Continued from Page 54)

active part. That, at least, was the way she answered her imp. And both she and Jason tried to atone for the inadequacy of their explanations by shouting them loudly and fervently. A ludicrous state of affairs!

"What I start I finish!" cried Jason.

"I'm risking my last penny in order to make enough to get away!" cried Mary. "Liars and idiots!" said the imps, and, biding their time, laughed softly to themselves.

Vivienne's letter, which was received by Jason in due course, only served to convince him that he had made the correct decision. If, as she informed him, neither Powell nor Upsher believed there was oil on the place, then he certainly would have been foolish to have sold at the price they would have paid for mere grazing land.

Vivienne, it may be remarked in passing, accounted very casually for her friendship with Mr. Powell. She laid no stress at all upon the importance of Mr. Powell in her life. In fact she called him a Mr. Powell.

"A Mr. Powell," she wrote, "an acquaintance of mine, a friend of Aunt Mabel's, surprised me almost to death the other day by mentioning that he had tried to buy your ranch. What a small world it is after all!" And so on and so on.

Then she proceeded to the revelation that Mr. Powell and Mr. Upsher, both experts, had seen no trace of oil; that, indeed, the formation of the soil, "whatever that may mean," led them to believe that the prospects of oil were extremely remote; that they had sought to buy the ranch merely as a home. And then she delivered the blow:

"I'm glad you didn't sell, just the same, because, Wonder Boy, I want it to be our home. Never, never will I live in this abominable city! I know by your letter that you think I want to, but I don't, I don't, I don't"—mere print cannot reproduce the underscoring of these "don'ts"—"I'm only waiting for you to call to come to you. Aunt Mabel and I are going to Atlantic City for a rest, only God knows where the money's coming from. They've offered me a part at the Summer Garden, but I won't play in that dump, and besides I've had a fight with Schumann. Besides I want my next part to be in straight drama—a part like Barrymore's in *Déclassé*! Well, you'll be proud of me yet."

Jason laid aside the letter with a heavy sigh.

Women, he reflected, were incomprehensible. Of course, he was not exactly the first man to reach that conclusion—Adam, probably, or Zeus, who, although not a man, was very human. He decided to read to Mary that portion of the letter devoted to the oil situation, or rather the lack of oil situation.

Mary was frankly incredulous.

"It's a trick of Powell's," she answered. "Don't you see that he's trying to get you to sell out cheap?"

But Jason shook his head.

"I don't think so. He told my friend all this before he had the slightest idea my friend knew me."

"Maybe," said Mary; and she added after a moment, "Your—er—friend is absolutely trustworthy, I suppose? I mean he isn't the kind to help Powell at your expense?"

She glanced up at him with a dairymaid innocence written all over her lovely pink-and-white face. But there was guile in the far-from-dairymaidish heart.

Jason hesitated, blushed, coughed a little.

"It isn't a man," said he. "It's a girl friend."

"Oh, of course! I beg your pardon." In his turn he looked at her, and suddenly he grinned cheerfully.

"You knew it was all the time," he said. "Gosh, you women are funny! You get my angors, all of you!"

"We try to," she admitted.

"The trouble with the whole bunch of you is that you have no reasoning faculty, or if you have you don't use it. That's why we men can't follow your giddy flights. Now take a man—" he began didactically.

"What man shall I take?" she demanded.

"Take any man. He's logical. He reasons things out and then makes his decisions, and he decides according to the weight of arguments pro or con. You people would decide one way if it was raining and another way if the sun happened to be shining."

"You mean about taking an umbrella or not? Yes, I suppose we would."

"Don't be silly!" he adjured her severely. "All right, let's talk sense then. When do you want to ride over to buy Mammoth Ike?"

"Why not to-morrow? The sooner the better. How far is it?"

"Well," she said, "it's just across the border of the county—about forty miles. We can do it easily in a day, but coming back will be another proposition. You see, we'll have to lead Mammoth Ike, and—well, I don't imagine he's very speedy. It'll take us all of twelve hours to get back. And we've got to break the trip so as not to tire the beast. That jack's got to be handled with gloves, I tell you. He's worth his weight in gold."

"You're the boss," declared Jason.

The boss decided then that they would ride over on the following day and allow two days for the return trip. There were ranches on the way, with the owners of which she was acquainted. They would be glad to put them up overnight—Western hospitality.

"Shall we take your father?" inquired Jason.

"Of course not! Someone's got to stay home and look after your property, hasn't he? However, if you want a chaperon we might take Ben."

"I don't want no chaperon," he proclaimed. "I'm not afraid of you."

"Well, you ought to be if you aren't," she warned him. And there was just a hint of anger in her voice.

MR. UPSHER sat at his desk in the office of Powell, Upsher & Co., Promoters, New York. In spite of his ill health, Mr. Upsher still chose to attend to business pending the time that he and Powell should find a suitable ranch on which to nurse their bodies and their nerves back to normal. Mr. Powell, however, had practically retired from affairs, although he put in an occasional appearance whenever there was an urgent call from Mr. Upsher for his presence. Mr. Powell, it will be understood, had other matters in New York to attend to. He did not yet despair of getting for himself a wife; and whatever others may think, Mr. Powell believed that a man should not be occupied with money getting and wife getting at the same time—that is, of course, if he expected to be successful at either.

But Mr. Upsher, who had thus far no matrimonial ambitions, sat at his desk studying a large-scale map of a portion of Montana. His secretary sat beside him.

"Now, Jamieson," Mr. Upsher said, "just read me that telegram again, and read it slow."

Jamieson began: "Report new six-hundred-barrel well brought in on King's ranch near southeastern corner of property. Lease of this entire ranch taken up by Carruthers people. Nearest unleased property Gray Forks Ranch owned by Jason Gray. This about twenty miles distant from new well. No rush so far, but Gray property should be looked over."

"That all?" queried Upsher, his eyes still on the map.

"Yes, sir."

"It's from Abe Woolf, you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"U'm!" said Upsher. "One of our best oil scouts too. Knows his job. Quick on the trigger."

"Yes, sir. What do you wish to do about it?"

Upsher hesitated, removed his gold-rimmed glasses, tipped back his chair, frowned and pondered.

"Well," he said at last, "it beats me. Mr. Powell and I, you'll be surprised to know, went over the whole of this Gray Forks place together. Not looking for oil either. I mean, that wasn't our main object."

Jamieson nodded, but there was disbelief in his heart, for he knew that the junior partner looked for oil everywhere he went. However, Upsher's next words bore out his conviction.

"Of course," said Upsher, "I kept my eyes open. I'd heard about this Carruthers crowd finding oil out there in the county. Not much oil, but a little, a little. Well, I wouldn't have given ten dollars an acre for that Gray property so far as hope of finding oil on it went—not ten dollars. Mr. Powell don't know much about that end of it, of course, but he agreed with me. He wanted to buy it for a ranch, and here's



This "Yankee" Vise assures accuracy from start to finish of a job

"YANKEE" VISES

No. 1993—Body 7¼ in. long, 2¾ in. wide; 3 in. high over all. Jaws open 3¾ in.

No. 993—Same as No. 1993 but without swivel base.

No. 1992—Body 4¾ in. long, 2 in. wide; 2 1-16 in. high over all. Jaws open 1 15-16 in.

No. 1991—Body 3¾ in. long, 1½ in. wide; 1½ in. high over all. Jaws open 1½ in.

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"YANKEE" TOOLS

Spiral Screw-drivers
Quick-Return Spiral Screw-drivers
Plain Screw-drivers
1¼ to 30 inch blades
Ratchet Breast Drills
Ratchet Hand Drills
Ratchet Bench Drills
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Automatic Push Drills
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Write today for the "Yankee" Tool Book, mailed FREE. Contains over a hundred illustrations showing tools in action.



Lock the work in the vise at the bench. Center punch it. Then remove the vise, with the work in it, from the base and carry it to the drill press.

From machine to machine it goes, still locked in the vise, in the original alignment.

Sides, end, top and bottom of the body and the sliding jaw are accurately machined to hold work square when used flat or on sides.

This means not only accuracy of the finished work, but speedier production. For many operations the "Yankee" Vise can be used as a jig.

The vise is quickly detachable from the swivel base by simply turning a set screw. The base has a cam-throw lever at the side which permits locking the vise in the desired position.

The removable, hardened steel block with V shaped grooves of various sizes increases its field of usefulness as it holds round or irregular work.

Dealers everywhere sell "Yankee" Tools.

NORTH BROS. MFG. Co. Philadelphia

"YANKEE" TOOLS

Make Better Mechanics

he's out again!



THAT irrepressible, uncontrollable, indefatigable big toe. Pushed his way right through a brand new sock, just to show how easy it was.

The women of the world have been fighting a losing fight against the big toes of the world for years. They have fought with the darning needle—about as much use in such a fight as a pop gun against shock troops.

True Shape

SOCKS

KEEP THE BIG TOES IN

Reinforced socks are no novelty, but these **TRUE SHAPE** Socks are different.

TRUE SHAPE Socks are made by a process which considers the rights of the big toe as well as his unruliness.

They are wonderfully strong but smooth and soft and yielding. They don't hurt the toe but they teach him his place.

TRUE SHAPE Socks outwear other socks, are easy on the feet, are closely woven of the best Japanese silk, and have no superior for appearance.

ASK YOUR DEALER FOR

TRUE SHAPE No. 152

TRUE SHAPE Hosiery is also made for women and children. If your dealer cannot supply you, write us direct.

Wherever you are, you'll be sure of hosiery satisfaction if



you insist on the **TRUE SHAPE** diamond on each pair.

TRUE SHAPE

HOSIERY CO.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

where the joke comes in—young Gray refused to sell it at any reasonable price, because he said he knew there was oil on it. Don't that beat the Dutch?"

Jamieson agreed that that beat the Dutch. He was a good secretary and agreed to anything.

"And now," continued Upaher, "according to Abe Woolf it's a damn good prospect. All right, here goes! Take dictation, please, Jamieson. Telegram to Woolf. 'Examine Gray property thoroughly on any pretext. Don't think anything there, but keep your eyes open. Continue to report on results of Carruthers people adjoining. If other scouts approach Gray telegraph me immediately.' There, that's all I can do. Get that off at once, Jamieson. And, of course, all this is very private—very private. Don't think I'll bother even Mr. Powell with it unless something more definite comes out. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," said Jamieson.

MARY and Jason rode over to purchase Mammoth Ike, as they had planned. And as they had planned, they led him back at a walk to Gray Forks, breaking the tedious return journey by passing the night at a hospitable ranch on the way.

Jason, for one, enjoyed the outing enormously. The weather favored them, and the air and exercise favored Mary. They commented what they termed their friendship, and yet if it had been a perfect friendship and nothing else Jason would certainly have confided to Mary the precious understanding that existed between himself and one Vivienne Vincent. What else is a friend for but to be harassed by intimate confidences of that sort? The accusation of some modern critics that Corneille and Shakspeare were stilted and artificial because they made use of a confidant to further their exposition is baseless; it is the most natural way to reveal on the stage the condition of a character's heart. But—and it is an important but—the confidant should never by any possibility be chosen from among those characters with whom the confider has the remotest chance of falling in love. Accordingly Jason did not confide in Mary.

They purchased Mammoth Ike for eighteen hundred dollars, and Mary, who did all the bargaining, declared him cheap at the price. There was no doubt about his being a fine upstanding jackass, more than fifteen hands and weighing about eleven hundred pounds. He had been brought all the way from Kentucky, where they make an art of breeding, and he had a pedigree as long as his ears. Mary was delighted with him, as delighted as a girl who has just purchased a highly becoming evening wrap for a few hundred dollars less than she expected to pay. Jason contented himself with remarking that it looked like a darned good donkey, which, after all, is probably similar to what the male partner would have said about the evening wrap.

They talked business—strictly business—during a great part of the return trip. Mary was frank and outspoken where business was concerned, and always discussed the breeding of mules with Jason as unblushingly as if she had been a man. There were, of course, details to be considered which, had they been propounded in a drawing-room, would have rattled the teacups in the hands of nervous maidens.

When they did not talk business they exchanged reminiscences, and Jason told her the story of his life complete, except for the Vivienne incident. He spoke of his father. It seemed that she had met old Caleb.

"I think," she said, "that he's a very fine man. He certainly has been wonderfully fair with father, although we had to show a loss on the property last year. I met him when I was in New York. He and father and I dined together. That is, he took us out to dinner and the theater."

"What show did the old boy pick out?" asked Jason with curiosity. "I thought he hated theaters—works of the devil and that sort of thing."

"I was quite surprised," answered Mary, "and very much amused. We went to see a ridiculous musical show called *Squads Right*."

"What?"

"Yes," she repeated—"*Squads Right*. A silly thing with an aviator hero and a lot of girls dressed up like doughboys. It was during the war, you know; or at least just after the armistice."

"And you mean to say my father selected that show?"

"Why, yes!"

"Great Scott!" said Jason slowly and meditatively. Then he added, after a slight pause, "Who was the leading woman?"

"The leading woman? Oh, I don't remember. Vivienne Something-or-other, I think. But she wasn't very good—too affected, and no voice."

"Oh!" he said.

"She had a stupid song about an aviator flying in France—silly, I mean—maudlin—false patriotism—you know. You'd have hated it."

He laughed rather mirthlessly.

"I'm not so sure," he said. "I saw her show last winter and thought she was pretty good."

"Then you do know her name," she remarked, scrutinizing him.

He stammered a little, tripped up.

"Why, yes," he said—"Vivienne Vincent. I suppose you mean her. She's—she's quite famous."

"Is she? Yes, I suppose she would be. Do you know her?"

Fortunately Mammoth Ike decided at that moment that he was weary, that he had walked too long and too docilely. He was not living up to the reputation of his species. Jason, who held the leading rope, was forced to dismount and coax him to continue, and this gave Jason time to decide whether he should lie or tell part of the truth. The whole truth he would not tell at any cost.

"Do you know her?" repeated Mary when they were once more on the way.

"Oh, yes," answered Jason carelessly. "I met her at a party. She goes everywhere—naturally. She's very well-born, I believe—a lady and all that."

"How funny!" said Mary, and endeavored to see his face; but he kept it turned to the straggly line of cottonwoods that separated the road from a querulous stream.

There was no further mention made of Vivienne during the ride.

At dusk they passed through the gateway of Gray Forks—an unusual cavalcade. Mary on her black mare was now leading Mammoth Ike, while Jason rode slightly behind, his long legs dangling almost to the ground on either side of his short, wiry pony. Their speed was perforce determined by that of the jack, so that it was a very leisurely procession that filed up to the ranch house.

"There's something Spanish about us," Mary observed. "I can't explain it, but I know there is. Cervantes ought to write us up and Zuloaga ought to illustrate us. Don't you see it? Man and girl; a bandit and his—well, let's say his banditess—both riding, and leading a huge ass. That's the foreground. In the background the vague outlines of a house with lights glowing through the windows, all set against low, black hills and a setting sun."

Jason regarded her with frank, naïve admiration.

"Where did you learn all the things you know?" he asked. "Writers and painters and everything? You know a lot more about them than I do."

"I study," she said. "Besides, didn't I tell you that father's an Edinburgh man? We're a very intelligent family."

Mr. Tripler came out to meet them, followed closely by Ben and two or three of the other men on the place.

"I see you've got him," observed Tripler. "Take the rope, Ben, while I have a look at this prize ass."

With the aid of a lantern he examined Mammoth Ike carefully from head to hoof. Mary and Jason stood by, awaiting the verdict. Ben and the other boys crowded round as close as possible, uttering exclamations of admiration and astonishment as the jack's good points were brought out one by one.

"How much did he cost you?" asked Tripler.

"Eighteen hundred," said Mary.

Tripler turned and solemnly shook Mary by the hand.

"Your Scotch blood," he said. "He's a bargain."

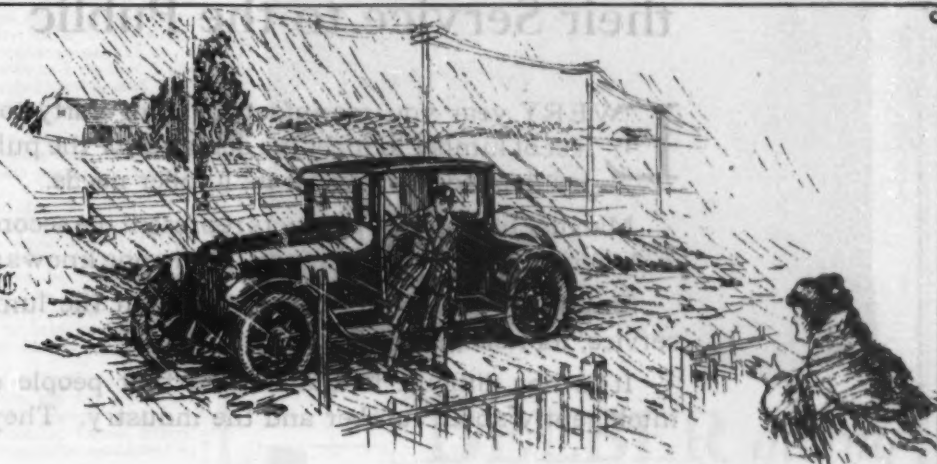
"I told you so!" cried Mary triumphantly. "We're all going to make money with the help of Mammoth Ike and the Lord."

"We may," admitted Tripler gravely—"we may—barring accidents."

(TO BE CONCLUDED)



BUICK



"I tell my friends there is no better car built"

**New Series and Prices
Effective June 1st, 1921**

Model 22-44	- - Three Passenger Roadster	- - \$1495
Model 22-45	- - Five Passenger Touring	- - 1585
Model 22-46	- - Three Passenger Coupe	- - 2135
Model 22-47	- - Five Passenger Sedan	- - 2435
Model 22-48	- - Four Passenger Coupe	- - 2325
Model 22-49	- - Seven Passenger Touring	- - 1735
Model 22-50	- - Seven Passenger Sedan	- - 2635

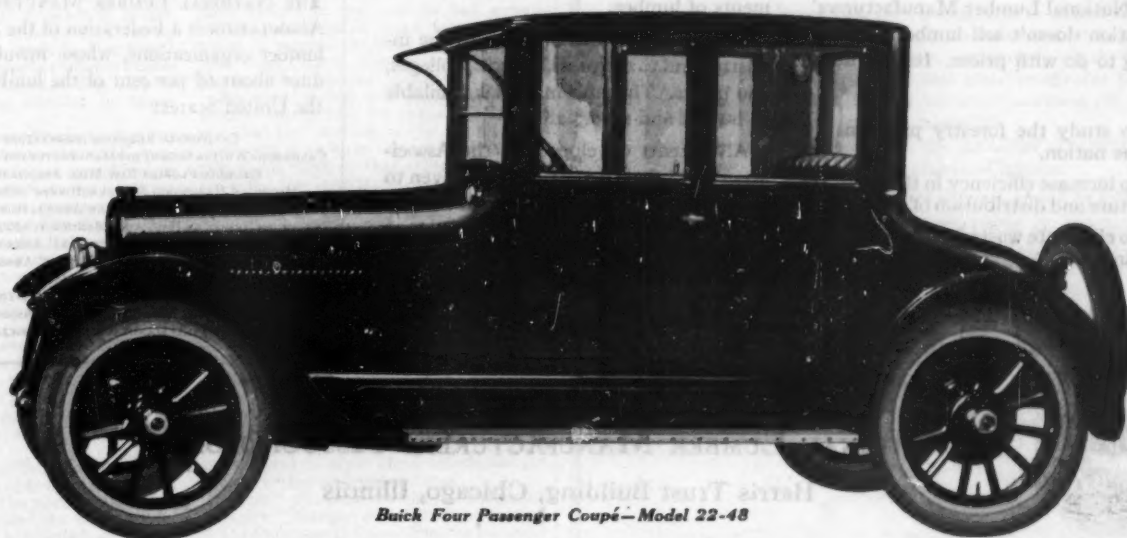
F. O. B. Flint, Michigan

Buick owners are Buick's best salesmen. This is readily understood when one considers that they are in the best position to know the unfailing dependability, power, and ruggedness of the Buick car. What Dr. A. C. Lindsley, of Mexico, N. Y., writes is a typical experience of Buick owners:

"I had my first Buick in 1903 and I have had many Buicks since, each better than the one before. Now I have my ideal—the new model Forty-Eight, besides my Model H-Six-46 coupé. The new Forty-Eight is a wonderful car and is going stronger all the time. I tell my friends that there is no better car built."

BUICK MOTOR COMPANY, FLINT, MICHIGAN

Pioneer Builders of Valve-in-Head Motor Cars
Branches in all Principal Cities—Dealers Everywhere



Buick Four Passenger Coupé—Model 22-48

WHEN BETTER AUTOMOBILES ARE BUILT, BUICK WILL BUILD THEM

An Open Letter to Saw Mill Men about their Service to the Public

EVERY year you manufacture from thirty to thirty-two billion feet of lumber to meet the demands of the public. Every industry depends on you for its lumber needs.

Manufactured forest products represent the second greatest industry in America. Agriculture is first. Every one knows about Agriculture.

But what does the public know about the lumber industry? Its service, its risks, and hazards?

It is not difficult to understand that people do not think very intelligently about lumber and the industry. They just don't know.

Educating the public to understand the lumber industry

YOUR Association—the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association—is going to tell the story of lumber. No American industry yet has ever told its story to the American people.

We will start in with the fundamental facts. And saw mill men, too, probably will learn more about their own industry.

What the Association is doing for the lumber industry

THIS Association is the logical spokesman for the lumber industry—America's saw mill men.

The National Lumber Manufacturers' Association doesn't sell lumber. It has nothing to do with prices. Its functions are:

To study the forestry problems of the nation.

To increase efficiency in the manufacture and distribution of lumber.

To eliminate waste in logging and milling.

To promote the proper utilization of all lumber products.

To aid in developing by-products to utilize the largest possible percentage of every piece of timber.

A real public service

SUM it all up, its purpose is to assist the lumber industry to render a more efficient service to the public.

The public doesn't know that your Association publishes a monthly bulletin of information about your industry. Or that it provides a weekly Statistical Barometer giving current information about changes in supply and demand, and the current production and shipments of lumber.

These publications are sent to the industry, and to the press, schools, colleges, and banks. This information is available to buyers and sellers alike.

All patents developed by the Association's technical department are given to the public. It has already developed a heavy timber "mill construction" that doubles resistance to fire; an ordinary

frame construction for houses which is singularly free from fire hazard. And a book of "Frame Construction Details," designed for strength, saving in cost, and fire retardance.

The public wants to know about lumber

THE public will be interested to learn something about the lumber industry, because it is face to face with your achievements every minute of every hour of every day in the year.

THE NATIONAL LUMBER MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION is a Federation of the following lumber organizations, whose members produce about 65 per cent of the lumber cut in the United States:

CALIFORNIA REDWOOD ASSOCIATION
CALIFORNIA WHITE & SUGAR PINE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION
GEORGIA-FLORIDA SAW MILL ASSOCIATION
MICHIGAN HARDWOOD MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION
NORTH CAROLINA PINE ASSOCIATION
NORTHERN HEMLOCK & HARDWOOD MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION
NORTHERN PINE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION
SOUTHERN CYPRESS MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION
SOUTHERN PINE ASSOCIATION
WEST COAST LUMBERMEN'S ASSOCIATION
WESTERN FORESTRY & CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
WESTERN PINE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION



NATIONAL LUMBER MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION

Harris Trust Building, Chicago, Illinois

THAT DISTINCTIVE FEEL

(Continued from Page 21)

"But these are real Irish linen! And look at the label!"

"At that, you never would have stood for the high price and the low conversation if it hadn't been for that carpet. The old boy sunk us to a low whisper and then nailed us. Great work!"

Up the street we noticed similar collars in the window of an ordinary haberdashery for fifty cents each. We were indignant—not at the old gentleman for having charged one dollar and twenty cents, but at the nerve of a common haberdasher trying to get away with it.

The answer to our indignation was that this haberdasher had other collars in the same window ranging in price from fifteen cents to thirty. By doing that he had permitted us to get a sense of proportion—a fatal lack of imagination for him. He was not an artist, I know now. Not once did I feel resentful toward the swell place. For a month or so I actually reveled in leaving my nifty collars on the dresser so that callers could see the swell label worked in the band. I always had to take off my collar and lay it on the table during a card game.

"Jim," I confided to my roommate a week or so after our experience, "I've doped out the trick about those dollar-and-twenty-cent collars. It is psychology. We've been boning up on that for two months, and I've just got onto it. You wouldn't have had any trouble in that last exam if you'd thought about that old gent and his carpet. I guess, after all, being a merchant ain't so bad."

My father smiled when I made my decision known to him, but he didn't seem excited at all.

The next fall I took up my place in the executive offices of the store. I was determined to dope out the exclusive idea. I dug out my books on psychology and began to study them all over again. You see, I had a half-baked notion that the whole thing could be done mentally. Being young, I didn't realize that with this psychology must be coupled a little experience, at least, and a whole lot of observation.

At this time there was great rivalry among the big stores to be known as places of distinction. I waded in with much zest, my father always holding the checkrein. I knew that people pay well to be distinctive. A look at the label in my collars was sufficient proof of that. I watched the activities of other merchants and made daily reports. Even the Fourteenth Street stores were bitten with the distinctive bug to a certain extent.

The Three Shopping Districts

As you know, perhaps, shopping in New York is divided into three distinct districts—the Fourteenth Street section, the Thirty-fourth Street territory and that very exclusive and expensive area around Fifth Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street. Those people who have to be very careful in their expenditures trade in Fourteenth Street, the more prosperous middle classes in the Thirty-fourth Street section, and the bon-ton, highfaluting element in upper Fifth Avenue.

Our store is in the middle class. It is our constant aim to remain in the middle section, but to have ourselves considered as classy as the stores in the bon-ton territory. The Fourteenth Street stores have the same feeling toward us. The lines I have indicated are very clearly drawn. To cross them is like scaling a stone wall—for the merchant I mean. To get rid of the classification that has been stamped upon him by custom is practically impossible—but it has been done.

A few years ago one of the big Fourteenth Street merchants decided to move his department store, or rather open a new one in Thirty-fourth Street, to get in the upper swim. At the same time he kept his old place down below, where he had grown prosperous.

It is almost impossible to make an outsider realize what a move like that means. It is revolutionary. The mere presumption of it in this case startled the whole trade. If you can imagine a railroad conductor suddenly deciding to become president of the system you may get an idea of this man's task.

This merchant knew that he couldn't move his trade with him. In a few weeks

a serious doubt arose in his mind as to whether he could ever make the higher-class trade believe he was running a fashionable store in his new location. Try as he would to erase it, the Fourteenth Street brand on him appeared to be indelible. Mind you, he had a million dollars or more at stake.

This man's merchandise was of about the same grade as the other department stores in his new section, but he could make nobody believe it. At the end of a month he was almost in despair. One day he displayed several magnificent evening gowns of French design and any number of smart frocks less expensive, all of high quality. Still the veteran shoppers passed him by.

"You know as well as I do that I am handling high-class fashionable stuff," he said to a friend while discussing his dilemma.

"Yes," agreed the friend, "that is true; but you've got to make these women believe that fashionable people are wearing them."

That gave him an idea.

"I'll make your high-stepping trade fall for my stuff," he declared, "or I'll go broke trying. Just wait and see!"

That very afternoon he made arrangements for an interview with a woman pretty well known as an arbiter of fashion. He persuaded her to have luncheon with him, presumably to discuss some matters of design.

A hint from a friend had informed him that this lady often got her gowns for nothing, the dealers feeling repaid in having her wear them at formal affairs. Her gowns were frequently mentioned in the society notes.

A Bold Stroke

Preparatory to the luncheon this merchant had got up some nifty ideas on advertising. At luncheon he laid his cards right on the table. One of these cards was a letter supposedly written by the lady saying that she had inspected his gowns and had chosen two charming French models. This was to be followed by another letter, both to be signed and the written signature reproduced.

The lady was induced to sign these, the inducement being twenty thousand dollars in cash. Two days later they appeared in a page advertisement in all the daily papers.

It is of record that within forty-eight hours sixty thousand women passed through the new Thirty-fourth Street store. Gowns that had been selected and worn by a lady whose name was familiar were certainly worth seeing—and buying!

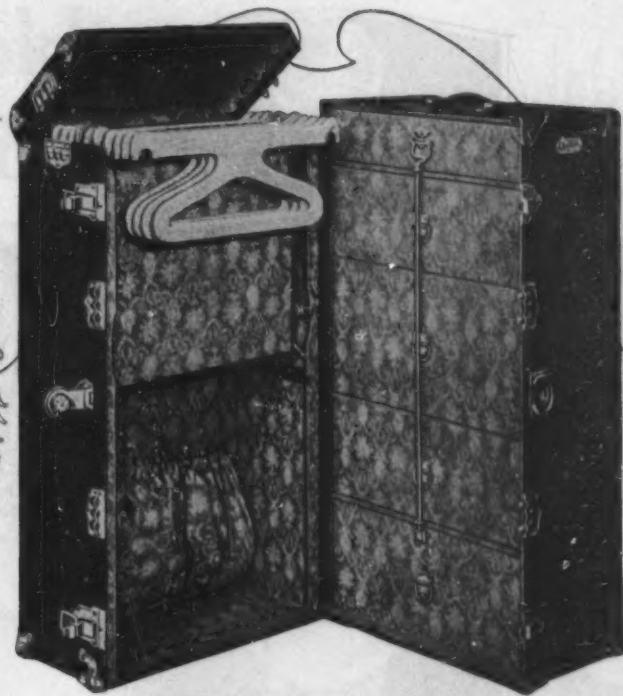
It was a wallop that made the smartest men of the trade sit up and take notice. By an appeal to what I would term apishness this merchant had put his new store on the map. By the expenditure of twenty thousand dollars in one way he had accomplished what would have taken twenty years of gradual building for reputation. And what's more, nobody sent back the gowns. They had real quality.

Fashionable and rich people buy inexpensive things just the same as anybody else, but the problem of the department-store man is to have them buy these articles at his store so that other people will know it. Our intelligent clerks know most of the society leaders by sight. If while waiting on an ordinary customer, for instance, one of them should recognize a known society leader in the store he makes a point of mentioning it to the person on whom he is waiting. The customer always takes a look and goes home with a little morsel of gossip. That has a tremendous effect. It is very difficult, though, to get clerks who are alert and clever enough to do this nicely.

The other day I was walking through the white-and-black shop of our store, and found the young woman in charge in a state of hysteria, whether assumed or not I do not pretend to say. Head salesladies get mighty temperamental at times.

"Why," she said to me in indignant whispers, "that girl over there was waiting on the Baroness de X—Yes, the baroness herself—and she didn't take the trouble to mention it until the baroness was out of the store!"

But for this awkward slip the pompous door man would have got the tip in time to



"BELBER giving wonderful values in wardrobe trunks"—

A WOMAN'S satisfaction in a new BELBER WARDROBE TRUNK lies wholly in her sense of possession of a fine trunk—in price, value, and traveling comfort.

A new model—No. 999

\$50.00

(West of the Mississippi, \$55.00)

It's a 5-ply BELBER construction, covered with blue fiber, and bound with black. Blue plush lines the adjustable top, and the inside of the trunk is covered with heavy blue cretonne. The firm, square corners and edges are reinforced strongly to withstand the hard knocks of travel.

Plenty of hangers—5 drawers (including HAT BOX), laundry bag and shoe pockets. The drawers are fastened by Bar-lock of latest design.

Every inch the thoroughbred it looks—your BELBER serves you not only on occasional trips, but every day in the year as an accessory wardrobe—compact, convenient—the best place imaginable to store away suits, hats, shoes, sweaters—anything you want packed away, yet easily accessible.

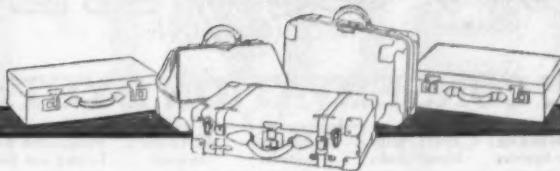
Make sure of the BELBER Trademark—your assurance of fine, practical luggage.

Other models at \$35 to \$250

The BELBER TRUNK & BAG COMPANY
Philadelphia, Pa.

Belber
TRAVELING GOODS

If your dealer cannot supply you this Trunk, send your check or money order to us. We will arrange to have the Trunk delivered to you.





Why Gasoline SHOULD Be Cool

As gasoline rises in temperature it *increases* in volume.

Meanwhile vapors vital to maximum mileage, easy starting and quick get-away evaporate.

Consequently, you get *fewer miles per gallon* and less *real, full-powered gasoline per gallon*.

Gasoline should be kept cool!

Just as vacuum bottles tend to keep their contents at a constant temperature, so gasoline stored underground in air-tight tanks averages less than 60° in temperature. Heated above this it increases in volume.

See that your next supply of gas comes from an air-tight underground tank, thence through a *piston-type pump built on the vacuum-bottle principle*. Such gas will be *cool*.

Watch the Dial and the Graduated Scale on this Wayne Pump. You'll see a finger on each checking off, *gallon by gallon, cool, full measures* of gasoline *after* delivery into your tank, *not before*. Note this point: Every drop has been *filtered and screened four times*. It's *clean*.

Note also the speedy service, easy operation, lack of complicated parts and explosive dangers.

Such features are vital to cool, pure gasoline, maximum mileage, accurate measure, minimum expense and safety. Incidentally you'll notice that these features are exclusive with Wayne Honest Measure Gasoline Pumps.

That's why dealers, garage and filling-station owners who believe in cool, clean, accurately measured gasoline, maximum mileage and honest business prefer Wayne Pumps. You'll find Bulletin 276 interesting. It's free.

Wayne Oil Tank and Pump Company, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

A national organization with offices in thirty-four American cities. Canadian Tank and Pump Co., Limited, Toronto, Ont., Can. Representatives everywhere. Repair stocks and expert service at your command.

REG. U.S.
Wayne
TRADE MARK

OIL CONSERVATION SYSTEMS

Gasoline and Oil Storage Systems	Heavy Metal Storage Tanks	Oil Filtration Systems	Oil Burning Systems	Furnaces for Metal Melting Forging and Heat Treating
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bid the baroness adieu, addressing her by title or name, which is mighty important.

In most big stores it is the custom to pass the name of a prominent customer out to the door man so that the lady will be sure of being recognized. It is a poor door man who doesn't recognize her when she returns.

This idea of having a number of exclusive little shops inside the big department stores has become quite a fad. Several years ago we noticed a growing tendency in the higher-class trade to stay away from the big stores where bargain-counter sales were in progress. There was too much noise about it. Quite frequently some of our well-known customers showed displeasure at buying hats or coats that other women were examining while they were trying to make a selection.

One of our smartest merchants sensed a solution, and opened a private little hat shop inside his big store where women could sit at dressing tables and have hats brought to them one at a time. It gave them the impression that nobody else had ever seen those particular models. Besides, women have a decided feeling of elegance and exclusiveness in being able to sit at a private dressing table on which are hatpins, hairpins, combs, and so on, for arranging the hair as may best suit their tastes—or the hat. The success of the private hat shop was immediate, and brought to the big stores a lot of the expensive business that had been going to the private milliners.

There are many women who still like the excitement of a bargain counter and the big displays of inexpensive goods. Some very big stores still cater to that trade, and it is all the better that they make a specialty of it. It is a real benefit to stores that do not have them, as well as to themselves. It merely emphasizes the exclusiveness of the more fashionable places. Women are thus enabled to choose between the classes.

Women are more prone to follow a leader than men. If, for instance, it became known that the Princess X bought her gowns at our store—which she does not—the Baroness Y would be drawn there. Following her would come the Countess A. Plain Mrs. B would certainly have to visit the place for a few little necessities, and following her would come Maggie C, the cook.

They all want to be in the swim, associated directly or indirectly with the exclusive set, whether it be Judy O'Grady or the colonel's lady. It's all the same.

It may not be becoming in me to say so, but New York is verily a city of snobs. Getting right down to cases, that's all there is to it. People want to appear to be something they are not.

The Piccadilly Touch

Do you suppose that you could sell an evening gown to a debutante if the saleswoman did not convey the idea in some way that its design was of French suggestion? You could not! On the other hand, our fashionable topcoats or greatcoats for men—not plain overcoats, mind you—must be of English weave or English style or English something. Even if we haven't got the goods, we must make our ads smack of the English club and countryside; you know, the kind where the swell-looking lord is alighting from his motor car for a tramp across the heather with his gun and dog, and where they are having tea at the manor with its green lawn. We may not say that the clothes—our own models—drawn on those gentlemen are English, but the reader gets that impression, and that is sufficient. Always it was an odd thing to me that the English only are supposed to have fashionable men's clothes and the French only fashionable women's clothes. No matter how we may regard this notion, though, we must accept it as a fact.

I have never been able to understand why the artistic French designers couldn't do something good for their men or why the fashionable English couldn't get up something presentable for their women. Of course there are well-dressed Englishwomen as well as well-groomed Frenchmen. But you would have a tough job making anybody in New York believe it. To bring the idea a little closer home, would one of you women think of going to a store and asking to be shown something smart in an evening dress of English design? Would you men think of asking for a suit of clothes French tailored?

As a matter of fact, the average well-dressed American does not care for the

style of clothes actually made in England by an English tailor. No, he wants English goods made up by an American. But he wants it arranged so they can be called English. That is what he is willing to pay for—and does. We perfect the arrangements.

Women appreciate this art of the French as well as the merchants and the American designers. We can fool them and satisfy them by copying French styles, but we can't sell our product unless we call it French. As a result of these observations we have found it absolutely necessary in our advertising to convey a French suggestion to our women's attire and an English one to our men's. Long since we gave up the old form of advertising ladies' and misses' suits. We now announce that we have this and that for madame and for mademoiselle.

Not long ago we made a killing on some summer frocks for the little folks by copying an ad that one of our buyers saw in front of a store in France. Instead of "For little girls and little boys," it read "Pour les fillettes et les garçonnets." With that as a coxer and a clerk with a broken-French accent in charge of the sale, it was a knock-out.

The French Shop

That French accent, by the way, is an important factor in selling expensive hats or gowns in our exclusive shops. It gives the exact tone that we need. A lot of women and girls in New York have studied a little French and are crazy about trying it out on one of these poor French clerks who could understand their English much better.

In our golf department we have found it a big matter of dollars and cents to have a head salesman with a Scotch burr or an exaggerated English accent. The clubs seem to swing better.

Recently New York merchants have been vying with each other in an effort to appeal to this apparently increasing desire for foreign fashions and fads. For substantial serviceable stuff American goods are always sought.

One of our competitors recently converted a whole floor of his store into what impresses one as the inside of a cathedral. The roominess of the place, its high vaulted ceilings and its soft carpets certainly make for low tones and awe. You may be sure there is no argument over prices there.

Another has given a floor to theatrical effect, the models walking around on a sort of stage. The customers, armed with lorgnettes, sit in comfortable opera chairs watching the models, and incidentally each other.

Not to be outdone, a friend of mine has put in a French shop complete in itself. On this he spent twenty-five thousand dollars in decorations. The woodwork is done in soft French gray, the carpet of a taupe shade with delicate figure. There are artistic chairs, a divan and several dressing tables with mirrors that come almost to the floor. The clerks are Frenchwomen, becomingly attired.

This merchant bought three genuine French gowns, for which he paid more than three hundred dollars each, for display. The material was worth about 10 per cent of that, the rest being paid for the art. Incidentally the French gown makers look upon the material about as an artist does the canvas on which he paints the picture. We always buy several of these gowns a season. Our designers imitate them with good effect, but cannot originate them. The purchase of these French gowns is a good investment if for no reason other than to encourage and stimulate our own designers.

This French shop was a decided hit. The profit from it was not so great, but it lifted the tone of the whole store—gave that little added touch of distinctiveness that makes the label more desirable. To complete the illusion, the ads for this shop are sometimes printed in the French language—the simplest French language. That gets the women and girls of all classes who think they know a little French. After visiting that impressive little imitation of a Paris shop, can you imagine those customers again rushing to a bargain-counter sale of remnants or ladies' and misses' house dresses?

The fundamental thing, after all, is to build up a reputation, establish prestige, so

(Continued on Page 65)

Can Your Bookkeeper Do These Five Things at Once?



Posting Ledger



Listing Daily Postings



Footings and Balancing Ledger



Writing Statements



Proving and Balancing Statements

At one writing the Elliott-Fisher accounting machine can perform these five essential bookkeeping operations. No other machine can do this. The pen method requires five separate tasks.

Because of the Elliott-Fisher flat-writing surface these five operations can be handled simultaneously, through permanently fixed carbons, with remarkable ease and the greatest speed. When completed each form contains complete information needed for that record. And the Visual Audit Sheet—another exclusive feature—gives a proof of the correctness of your entries.

No other bookkeeping device can produce all of these results. Only with an Elliott-Fisher can the operator insert forms of varying sizes and shapes, lined up correctly, write upon them, top or bottom, left or right, as freely as with a pen.

With the Elliott-Fisher your books are always in balance—bills are in the mail



This One Can!

THE ELLIOTT-FISHER IDEA

To make an accounting machine that meets all the requirements of the best accounting practice:

1. Gives a complete record—written descriptions as well as figures—of each transaction.
2. Saves the maximum of time and labor by making the greatest number of records at one operation.
3. Furnishes a mechanical proof of accuracy of operation.

ELLIOTT-FISHER CO.
342 Madison Ave., at 43rd St.
NEW YORK CITY
Branches in All Large Cities

daily—statements are out on the first day of the month—because all work is *proved* as soon as done—the essential facts and figures of your business are graphically set before you each day, when they can be of greatest use to you.

A Pittsburgh department store renders 35,000 statements each month with its 25 Elliott-Fisher machines. Contrast this with the Chicago department store which requires 50 "book-

keeping" machines to get out the same number of statements. In operators' salaries alone the Chicago store pays \$500 a week more than the Pittsburgh store.

Consider these five things—you do them all in your bookkeeping department—analyze the time, work and money they cost you.

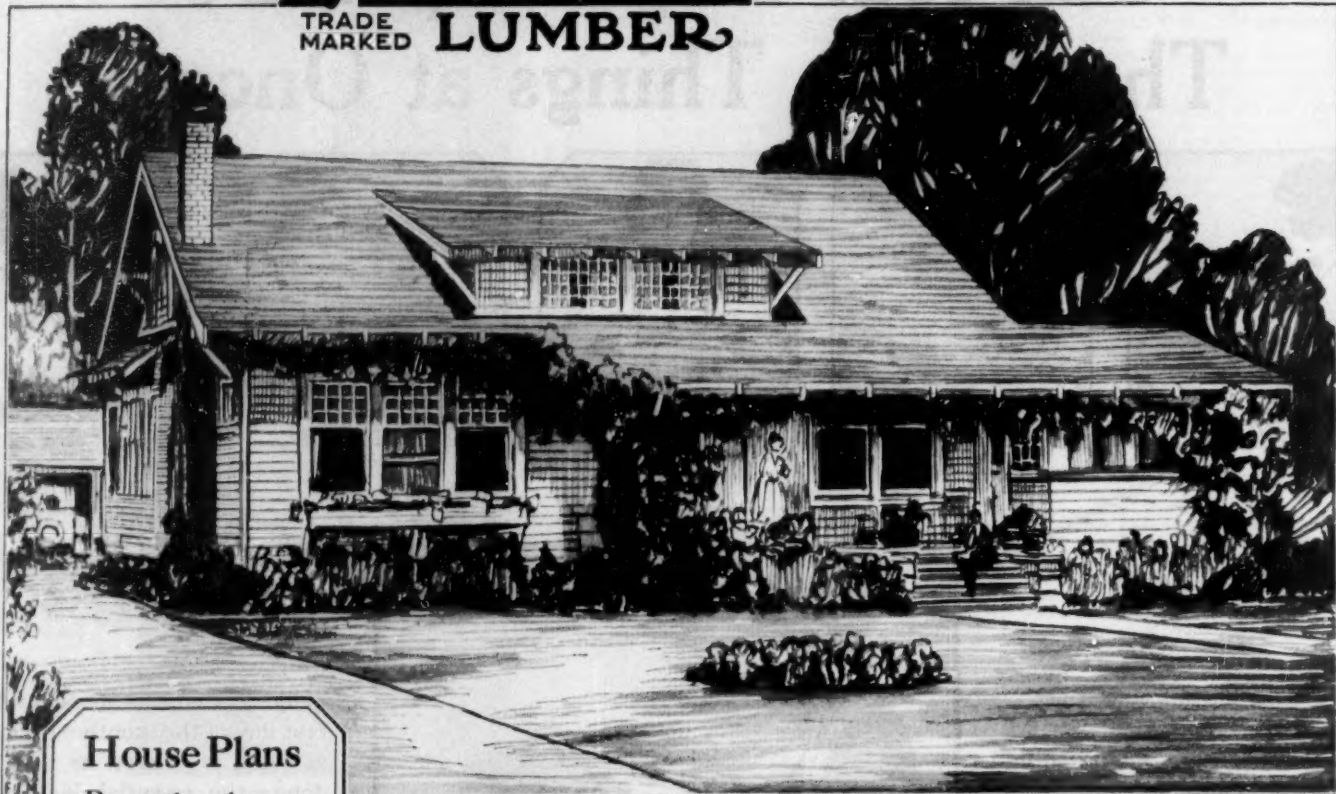
Our representative, without cost or obligation to you, will show you how the Elliott-Fisher can save you money and get you better, more useful results.

Elliott-Fisher

Accounting and Writing Machines: Flat Writing Surface

Long-Bell

TRADE MARKED LUMBER



House Plans

PLANS for the attractive home on this page (Long-Bell Plan No. 255) can be supplied you by your own lumberman. He can show you pictures and floor plans of many types of small homes.

Long-Bell

Nationally Known Products

Southern Pine Lumber and Timbers

Creosoted Lumber, Timbers
Posts, Poles, Ties, Piling
Wood Blocks

California White Pine
Lumber
Sash and Doors
Standardized Woodwork

Oak and Gum Lumber

Oak Flooring

Yes—but what will this Home cost?

—there's a man in your town who can tell you.

He's the lumberman down on the corner!

And he can tell you more than that. He knows about the kind of wood best adapted to your use. He can show you an interesting variety of doors, windows and built-in conveniences such as buffets and bookcases.

The lumberman down on the corner can obtain for you the blue prints from which you can build this charming home in the picture. If this one does not suit you he can show you dozens of other small home designs. If you want something more pretentious he will put you in touch with an architect.

The lumberman down on the corner knows the best carpenters and contractors. He can give you real building advice whether your needs be large or small. *He can show you how to make your building dollars go farther.*

Lumbermen know that *Service* is essential. And it is yours for the asking.

*For Dependable Lumber of Uniform High Quality
ask your Lumberman for Long-Bell Brand*

The Long-Bell Lumber Company

R.A. LONG BUILDING Lumbermen since 1875 KANSAS CITY, MO.

(Continued from Page 62)

that the rich and the poor will have a feeling of superiority in showing the labels in their garments. The several ways of exploiting this prestige are merely psychological tricks. But you must have the prestige! Prestige is built on one thing and one thing only—quality. When all is said and done, the basis of all reputation is quality. To convey the impression that it is one of quality, a store must deliver the goods. After that it is a game to see which can play the prestige to the best effect.

Though the big merchant must court the ultraexpensive trade to establish a reputation for distinctiveness, that is not his ultimate aim. It is merely the coxswain. In the store he carries great quantities of inexpensive goods, of course. The acquired prestige is used to sell these. His label is just as effective in the cheaper garment as in the more expensive. A woman wearing a forty-dollar wrap gets quite a feeling of pride in throwing it over the back of her opera chair and displaying the same embroidered label as that in the thousand-dollar coat of the rich woman in front of her. She is quite willing to pay an extra five dollars on a fifty-dollar frock for that distinction. As a matter of fact, though, she does not have to pay that much more.

There is little difference in the price of the same-quality garment in the stores of different grades. Stores often advertise goods marked down from fifty to thirty-five dollars, and it certainly has an appeal. But when you have paid thirty-five dollars, that is about all the frock is worth in any store. Shoppers deceive themselves by buying a cheaper quality cleverly designed to imitate the better grade.

After several years of competition in impressing the public with our distinctive goods, I noticed that store equipment had a tremendous influence—even the boxes in which things were delivered. This turned my thoughts to our delivery automobiles.

My father thought it an upstartish notion at first, but he let me go ahead. I spent twenty thousand dollars in having our delivery cars decorated. They have cut-glass side-light stands. The brass is shined to a high polish and the painted surface is gone over carefully every night. The drivers are required to be as particular about their military-looking uniforms as Prussian officers. One of these cars suffers very little in comparison with the luxurious limousine of Mrs. Montmorency-Katish or the Baroness X—

The scheme worked like a charm. It is quite a thing in certain parts of New York to have a delivery car like that pull up at your door. The woman who takes advantage of it has quite a sense of elevation in knowing that the neighbors are peering out of their windows at the elegant equipage. Two trips in a day are enough to start neighborhood gossip of an approaching marriage or sudden fortune, I am told.

Charge Accounts

The biggest single factor in getting the high-class trade and holding it, I believe, is the charge account. The race for this class of shoppers has become so keen that I know of one high-class merchant who has put on thirteen million dollars in credit accounts in a single year. Think of what it means to collect that! But it is well worth it.

Most wealthy men take a pride in the appearance of their womenfolk and are quite willing to spend five or six thousand dollars a year on their dress. There are mighty few such men, though, who would hand out the five thousand dollars in cash to their wives and daughters. The actual money passing through the fingers makes most anybody hesitate. But they won't hesitate to pay shopping bills of that amount. With a check it doesn't seem so big.

Another important feature to the charge account is that the purchasers are not predetermined as to what they will spend when they come into the store. If you should give your wife fifty dollars to buy a dress the chances are that she would limit herself to about forty or forty-five. No amount of persuasion could make her select a seventy-five-dollar garment. But with the magic charge account she sees something that she likes better, and it is very easy to say "All right, charge it." There is quite a grandiloquent satisfaction in the words "charge it."

It is about the same with the man who goes into a men's furnishing store and pays cash instead of writing a check. If he has but sixty dollars in his pocket he will ask to be shown something around fifty or

fifty-five dollars. If it is merely a matter of picking out what he wants and writing a check he won't be particular at all, and the man with the sixty dollars in cash may be much more able to spend twice that amount than the man who carries the check book.

It is not uncommon to use models to display dresses in the fashionable stores. One day I watched that show. From the way the middle-aged women followed the movements of the young-lady models I could see that each of them imagined herself looking exactly like that pretty model in that particular dress.

That struck me as the real notion for selling expensive gowns to gray-haired ladies with plenty of money. I decided to take a flyer at it. I overplayed my hand. I established a similar sort of display room and engaged the most beautiful young women obtainable for models. Every one of them was perfection in grace. It cost a lot of money, but, believe me, I had the niftiest lot of dress-wearers in all New York. They were certainly thoroughbred steppers.

The older women, some thin, some stout, some short and some long, went into raptures as they watched these graceful sirens move about and handle those clusters of silken draperies as if they had been wafted in by the breeze. Every one of them imagined herself in the creation she admired, and felt confident of looking like that model when she dressed to go out with her husband at the next affair.

In two days we sold nearly every expensive design we had in the store. Then came the rude awakening.

Too Perfect Models

I had picked my models too well. At home the disillusionment was too much even for the vainest of the ill-figured women. Their husbands laughed at them, they said. Eight gowns that cost around three hundred dollars each were returned in two days. Did I have to take them back? Certainly! A merchant cannot afford to be snippish with that kind of trade. But it taught me a lesson. After that we employed models not quite so perfect and of different ages. Later we even improved on that. We now engage young women and old women of varying figures who are not supposed to be models at all. They wear ordinary day dresses of attractive design and walk leisurely about the store as though they were customers. To avoid complete deception each of these dresses has a tag on the outside that can be observed on closer inspection.

A woman will notice a young lady very becomingly attired. She will look a second time. "My, that's a pretty frock," she will observe. Then she will see the tag. It is for sale.

"Would you mind letting me see that?" she says to the girl. "What is the price of it?"

"Why, I believe it is sixty dollars," says the model. "Here is the tag. Let's see—rather sweet little frock, isn't it? It feels so comfortable I think I would like it myself."

"Well, see if you have my size," suggests the lady. We certainly do have it in her size, and the girl has made a sale.

That has proved the best scheme of all. It pleases the customer and it is honest. She goes home knowing how the dress will look on her and she is satisfied.

I suppose you have observed some of those stately looking women of middle age or more who greet the women when they come into some special department of a store. Some of them are white-haired. My, how imposing they look! My sister tells me she always thinks of them as the Queen of Sheba. Young misses are frequently awed by their appearance. Also you have noticed probably that they rarely ever say anything after their official greeting. They walk away and let the trained shopgirl take charge. Their job is done.

The other day a former college acquaintance called for me to keep a luncheon engagement with him. I sent for my hat and coat.

"Gee, that's a nifty-looking overcoat!" he said, noticing the loose-fitting shoulders and the heatherish mixture of the weave.

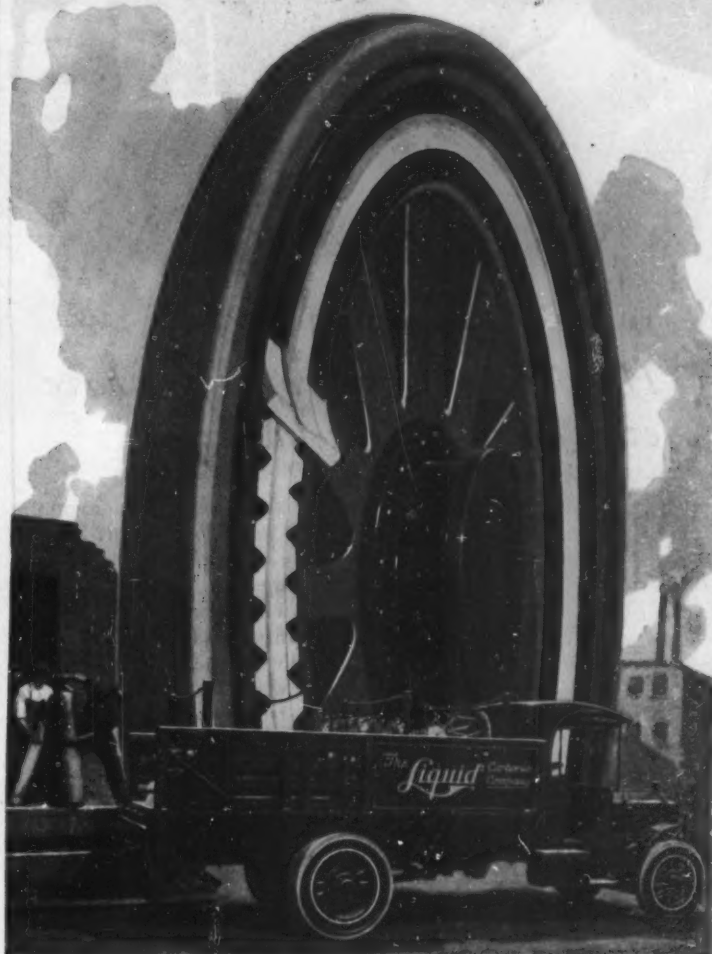
"It is kind of nice," I agreed, looking at myself in the mirror.

"You sell those here?" he asked.

"Oh, no," I informed him with a little shrug of pride; "that's an English coat—just came over from London. See?" And I turned the pocket inside out to show him the label.

Sewell Cushion Wheels

The Resiliency is Built in the Wheel.



1 Set in 1913 45 Sets Today

In 1913 the Liquid Carbonic Company of Chicago placed its first order for Sewell Cushion Wheels. This was followed one year later by an order for three sets; in 1915, five sets; in 1917, six sets; in 1919, fourteen sets; in 1920, sixteen sets. Today forty-five of the Liquid Carbonic Company's fleet of trucks are Sewell equipped.

This brief history is only one of hundreds that offer conclusive proof of the merits of Sewell Cushion Wheels.

The twelve-year history of this product is a long, consistent record of satisfied owners and repeat orders. It is the final proof that Sewell "double action" construction is an important factor in reducing motor truck transportation costs.

The Sewell Cushion Wheel Company

DETROIT, U. S. A.

Branches and Distributors in all Principal Cities



Take the word of a Practical Barber—

"Here is the best treatment I have ever found for the face"

BONCILLA absolutely does away with blackheads and cleanses the face not merely on the surface, but to the very bottom of the pores.

It stimulates circulation in the face and builds up firm underlying tissue, which in turn fills out the loose skin and does away with wrinkles.

The Boncilla treatment is given now in practically every good barber shop in America.

It is delightful and restful.

If you have never had a "Boncilla" try one today at your favorite barber shop.

It does the business. You will look ten years younger and your friends will wonder where you got that hale, natural outdoor color.

Insist on the full treatment and the use of the four Boncilla items pictured below.



Boncilla Laboratories

The Crown Chemical Co.
Indianapolis



These four comprise the complete "Boncilla Method"

THE GIRL WITH THE GOLDEN HEELS

(Continued from Page 5)

"Monsieur Jacques repeated many times, with the troubled air, that Monsieur LeCroix must not know."

Henri's eyes were fixed on my pocket, and I responded with a ten-shilling note.

"Monsieur and Madame LeCroix are aware that mademoiselle and I attend the meeting of the Anglo-French Association," I informed Henri, "but if mademoiselle prefers to think our serious journey a little joy ride leave mademoiselle to her pleasant fantasy."

Henri bowed, but as I went away I heard an asthmatic wheeze. A Paris cigarette fiend can come no nearer than that to an honest American chuckle.

I thought that I was in luck; that Odette was unlikely to have an engagement; that she was going out for only a run. I went along Ebury Street amused at the promptness of this maid of the Midi. She must have planned her outing quickly. If I could get her into the automobile I did not despair of convincing her that the meeting of the Anglo-French Association was to be held at the Savoy Restaurant; that she and I were the only members; and that we were to promote international friendship across a small dinner table. If Odette should wonder how an American could constitute the English half of the association I could explain that its great object was a Franco-American entente.

Jacques opened LeCroix's front door, and his eyes appeared to perform impossible gymnastics; so I knew that he had been warned against me. I said no word, but gazed sorrowfully at him.

"Come," I commanded at length, and went straight past him into the dining room. I closed the door. "So," I said, "when the master's back is turned you sneak out the car for the guest whom you should guard—une jeune fille—unchaperoned, a stranger to London."

I heard him curse Henri under his breath. "Henri is not to blame," I said. "I went for the auto. He thought that it was wanted for mademoiselle and me. Where was mademoiselle going?"

"For a spin, monsieur, Marie said. Marie is the maid of mademoiselle, and goes also. Marie commanded me. She is of great strength of mind. What could I do?"

I appeared to relent.

"You did perfectly right, Jacques," I promptly commended—to the old man's relief. "It is not so serious after all. I will take Marie's place." Jacques' shoulders sagged. "Unless I am present and know that all is right," I continued with some sternness, "I must inform Monsieur LeCroix."

"Oh, Monsieur Roke!" Jacques protested.

"It must be so," I replied. "I will myself conduct mademoiselle, and shall take all responsibility. You will not be blamed for anything. You are to do nothing, say nothing. Mademoiselle is at home now?"

"Yes, Monsieur Roke—dressing."

"All right, Jacques. You need not say that I am here. I will wait till she appears. Bring me pen, ink and note paper."

He brought not only these, but a green, sirupy-looking cordial and a silver box containing black cigarettes.

"Why did madame instruct you that she was not at home to me?" I demanded with calculated sharpness.

His tricks with his eyes proved that I had guessed aright, though he denied at first. I forced a confession.

"Madame said," he burst out at length, "Il a les beaux yeux." He smiled slyly. To conceal my pleased vanity I asked with a serious air: "But even supposing I were Apollo, why should mademoiselle be hidden from me?"

"I do not know this Monsieur Apollo," was Jacques' answer, given as he sidled toward the door.

"That is all, Jacques," I said.

I opened the door wide and thus commanded the stairway up to the half-way landing. Mademoiselle could not get by. I had outwitted her watchful guardians. Soon I should gaze on this wonder girl, of such beauty, such charm, such exquisite manners and apparently so susceptible to manly beauty that she must be kept from seeing her guardian's friend and partner,

who was not specially good-looking nor a danger to any woman. What could it mean? But the position added spice to the insolent, triumphant line which I penned:

My dear LeCroix: Mademoiselle est très diable. A bon chat, bon rat; or as we say—tit for tat. "Why did they leave that night her nest unguarded?" That's Longfellow.

Roke.

The front doorbell sounded.

I stood still. Odette retreated upward. I heard her.

"Jacques," she whispered as he passed, "remember, there is nobody at home."

I muttered a malediction on the untimely interruption.

"Jacques?" I heard this from the front door in a woman's voice.

"Oui, madame, at your service."

"I thought so. I am Madame Seravin. I have heard of you, Jacques."

"Madame Seravin!"

Jacques' note of surprise was marked. He must have lost his head, for he led her straight in to me and retreated without a word. I bowed low before this stately gray-haired lady, the mother of the owner of those charming feet. She stood still, looking me over from head to foot with austere questioning in her bright gray eyes.

"I am Mr. Charteris," I explained in French, "the partner of Monsieur LeCroix." I bowed again, for she was studying me as though I were a burglar. "Madame and he have gone out to a dinner. I did not know they were expecting you."

"They did not expect me," Madame Seravin answered me shortly in excellent English.

Now I do not speak French badly, and there is nothing that more annoys me than to be answered in English. I placed a chair for her.

"Be seated, madame," I said. She sat stiffly down, evidently puzzled by my apparent intimacy in the house. "And you have crossed to-day, madame," I cried, listening all the while for the hurried tap-tap of golden heels which should bear a daughter to a mother's arms. "And was the Channel kind? And how was the wind? And did you register your luggage?" I ran on breathless, for I felt that if I once stopped I should have to go. Now I had not laid my trap for a daughter to catch only the mother. I should wait. "Mademoiselle enjoys the best of health." She looked at me stony-eyed. I added blandly, "I expected the pleasure—"

"The pleasure of what, monsieur?" she asked icily.

"Of conducting mademoiselle to her engagement," I replied. "Monsieur and Madame LeCroix had an appointment connected with an affair of ships. It was of the highest concern that they dine in the country with my friend Mr. Shaw. He owns a fleet—but I will not intrude the details of this great negotiation on madame. I—"

"Mademoiselle Seravin," she broke in, "was left here in your charge, monsieur?"

Such incredulous surprise I think I have never heard expressed before or since. She was far too dignified to cock an ear; but her distinguished head was all the while bent a little, and she was listening as I was for the sound of footsteps. Her hard eyes, thus seen a trifle slantwise, bored into mine.

"It would be the custom of London," I answered blandly, "that a partner in business be profoundly trusted in the home. I am at the service of mademoiselle and of madame, her mother. In the absence of my partner his responsibilities are mine. Perhaps you will dine with me, mademoiselle and you, at some quiet restaurant."

Madame glowered, but said nothing for an instant. She looked at me aggressively enough, but still with a speculative air. It was clear that she was reflecting on a possible difference in customs.

"I do not understand, monsieur," she said at length. "Had Madame LeCroix arranged that my girl was to dine with you this night?"

"The LeCroix's," I promptly answered, "would expect me to carry out the wishes of mademoiselle, whatever these might be."

"Ah"—she bent forward and pierced me with her alert questioning eyes—"mademoiselle then has expressed a desire to dine with you?"

(Continued on Page 68)

From Maine to California



THESE STORES
and thousands
of others selling
Kahn made-to-
measure clothes
are qualified to
measure and cor-
rectly fit you.

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(Continued from Page 66)

"Far from it, madame. I am at her command. I hoped that she would dine. I hope now that you and she will dine."

"But what has mademoiselle said?" this grim mother cross-examined.

"She has not yet appeared," I answered as silkily as I could.

"But she was expecting you?" she persisted.

"No, madame," I confessed. "I have not the honor as yet of the acquaintance of mademoiselle."

Madame showed some relief, and reflected on this answer.

"Do I understand," madame asked with icy emphasis, "that Madame LeCroix sent you here—you, a stranger—to conduct my unchaperoned daughter?"

I had to exonerate Odette. I was bound to prove the LeCroix's guiltless. Besides any lie would soon be found out.

"I have come as a duty, madame," I submitted deferentially. "No one sent me."

Madame rose in grandeur, staring at me. But at that moment an elderly maid came soft-footed, panting, showing agitation. Madame rose and caught her by the shoulders, and said in what I am sure she meant for an inaudible whisper, "*Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?*"

She looked toward me, but the maid did not turn, did not answer, did not even seem to consider my presence. She kept gasping over and over, "Madame! Madame—here!"

"Calm yourself, Marie," cried Madame Seravin, and she grasped the hand of this woman in friendly French fashion. "I don't wonder you are surprised. It was my whim, the vicomte would also come."

"Monsieur le vicomte—here?" Marie's face was ashen. She trembled visibly. But she resolutely pulled herself together. "Oh, but, madame, it is good to see you!" she cried. She spread out her hands as though in delight, flooding madame with a cascade of words, telling of the trip over with mademoiselle. Everything had gone well; and Mademoiselle Odette had not been the least bit frightened or ill. "*La pauvre petite*," cried Marie in bad but voluble French, "she has the courage of a lion! And now she is not at home."

"But—but—" madame broke in in justifiable perplexity.

Marie was not to be stopped. "Mademoiselle will be so sorry," she rushed on. "She will be back soon, I dare say. Our little mademoiselle is charmed by these streets of brilliance. She —"

Madame slipped back and looked curiously at the excited, garrulous maid. But Marie only talked the faster. I knew that she was lying; that her young mistress was upstairs—had I not seen the golden heels?—that she was gaining time for some reason. I stood absorbed, forgotten by the two; by the puzzled mother, by the almost hysterical maid, who gabbled words faster than most Welsh members of Parliament—say two hundred words a minute. And then the doorbell rang again. The three of us were turned to stone. Not a sound, not a movement, until presently from the small hall came Henri's villainous accents:

"Jacques, you old rascal—he-he! The auto—for mademoiselle's joy ride with Monsieur Charteris—he-he!"

Madame glanced from Marie to me, then turned and rushed up the stairs with remarkable agility, Marie making a bad second and crying out "Madame! Madame!"

Henri came gliding in with his thin lips set to a diabolical grin.

"Monsieur Roke," he said softly in his Paris argot of the slums, "mademoiselle has shot the moon."

"Shot the moon?" I repeated, jumping to my feet.

"Yes, monsieur. Done a bolt through the back alley. Cook saw her."

I made the steps to the basement in three jumps, ran through the small back yard and along the alley to the street. There was no sign of a French girl in gold-heeled slippers, but one of several taxis speeding this way and that might have held her.

III

I RUSHED back up the servants' stairway straight to the guest room. I stood and looked at a torn dress which lay in a circle on the floor like a baked apple with a hole in the middle. Odette had evidently dragged it off her shoulders, stepped out of it, and kicked off her slippers anyhow, for one lay in a distant corner and the gold heel of the other projected from the folds

of the pink-and-white dress. I retrieved this slipper and thrust it in my pocket. At least I should have a souvenir of that charming picture I had seen on the stairs.

I heard a bell ring and listened, but could hear nothing, so I went on searching for clews. Sacrilege? Ah, yes, if you like; but accident had made me responsible for Odette—so I chose to think. A luxurious young lady, I saw. The late sun of a June evening gleamed through the open window on a bewildering litter of trifles scattered round the mirror on the dressing table. It gleamed, too, on a brilliant peacock embroidered on a silk screen which stood in front of the chimney piece, and this reminded me that a fireless summer grate is the favorite hiding place for scraps of paper. I got down on my knees, poked about with my fingers and gathered a few fragments which looked to me like the pieces of a bill. I thrust them into my pocket for examination later; then I turned to the dressing table. Here were the marks of frantic haste.

"Monsieur!" I wheeled at the indignant cry. A button of my coat caught in something which hung on the back of a chair. In the doorway stood Marie, staring as though she had caught me red-handed in murder.

"Has mademoiselle friends in London?" I demanded sternly, knowing that I looked ridiculous. A bewildering mass of lace, silk and blue ribbon was hanging down in front of me, and as I spoke I was trying to disentangle the filmy thing with clumsy hands that projected from powdered sleeves.

"Monsieur will tear the jacket!" Marie cried, and she ran over and knelt before me, plying plump fingers.

I repeated my question as she rose to her feet, but before she could answer the sound of madame's voice came ringing up the stairs—ringing joyful, staccato with pleasure, ending in a crescendo of laughter.

"Mademoiselle has come back?" I exclaimed.

"It is an explanation from monsieur that is needed," Marie said sulkily as she laid the desecrated garment tenderly on a chair.

"But is she found?"

"Yes, monsieur." I dragged from her the ludicrously simple explanation. Odette, supposed to dress as quietly as a nun, had arrayed herself like a butterfly. Marie was to hold the unexpected mother downstairs. Odette was to slip out of the dress and the back way, come in at the front and fall into mother's arms; then Marie was to fly to the room and hide the gorgeous garments. But the villainous words of the imbecile Henri had sent madame rushing upstairs. Madame had been *désespérée*. She had thought her daughter gone. Hence joy in the prompt return, caresses, endearments, laughter, and a postponement of questions.

I laughed as I listened, but Marie said spitefully that it was no laughing matter. She rapped my funny bone so sharply with the brush that I winced. I had greatly embarrassed mademoiselle, she charged. I had done more. I had all but compromised mademoiselle. What was I doing here anyhow? Why had I thrust myself in? Who was I? How had Henri come to speak so wickedly?

"I'll tell you all about myself," I replied with what I hoped was winning candor, "if you will tell me where mademoiselle was going in that beautiful dress."

"That is none of your business," Marie answered in good downright English.

"Your rebuke," I said, "is just, though blunt. Perhaps you'd better not tell mademoiselle that I was in her room."

"No fear!" More sound English.

"I will now," I announced, "go to madame and explain all."

"No!"

Marie's prohibition was fiercely uttered. Madame was worn out with her long journey. She was engaged with mademoiselle. On no account must they be disturbed. Monsieur must go out the back way. His hat she would bring to him. She hurried away, and I followed silently, with no intention of slinking out by the alleyway. Not only must my explanation be made that night with due humility, but I must get even with LeCroix. To meet Odette was to beat my partner and to clear her in her mother's eyes, for her manner would prove that I was a stranger.

I turned the handle of the drawing-room door and lingered for an instant. Marie, returning with the hat, ran forward with a cry. I stepped inside and shut the door in her face. Madame checked a ripple of laughter and stared at me. I stared, not at

her but at her only companion—an old man, white-haired, with a pale unwrinkled face.

"I did not know—I thought —" I stammered out, confused, but this astonishing Madame Seravin cut me off short.

"My dear Monsieur Charteris," she cried, "you are always welcome."

She looked at me almost as though I was a long-lost son. She turned and presented me as the young partner of Monsieur LeCroix, and she said as she tapped me on the arm that the inside of my head was far older than the outside looked. Suddenly she bent forward, and I saw her nostrils stretch. She inhaled the scent of Odette's jasmine, stared, expressed by her look the wish to assassinate me then and there—and ended by smiling on me as though she loved me.

Monsieur le Vicomte de Levillier, for that was the name I had caught, bowed with a fine dignity. Madame's affection for me became yet more tender.

"I was just telling the vicomte, monsieur," she said, "how I missed my daughter by just three minutes. It is the worst of luck, is it not? But even if I had caught her"—she turned to the vicomte—"I could not have kept her. Such an engagement cannot be put aside. I should have had to let her go."

The vicomte bowed; I tried to look as though I understood.

"I shall wait for her here," madame continued. "What is dinner to a mother? But with you, monsieur, it is different. Monsieur Charteris comes by the direct hand of Providence. He places himself at our disposal. He is a gourmet. Oh, yes, you are," she ran on, turning to me. "I have heard more of you than you think. Madame LeCroix is a great letter writer. Monsieur le Vicomte will allow you to conduct him to dinner, Monsieur Charteris."

She fixed me with her stern compelling eyes, her gaze made more hypnotic by the smile on her lips.

"Will monsieur honor me?" I said in my best manner.

Monsieur le Vicomte de Levillier would, and I thought madame would embrace me.

"To-morrow, monsieur," she said to the vicomte; "dinner at twelve. Odette will be so happy."

The vicomte straightened his shoulders jauntily and succeeded in looking as young as fifty-five. I suspected the truth then, and I believe that I made some kind of horrified exclamation, for madame turned her head and sternly chided me with those extraordinary piercing eyes. Dazed, I meekly led the vicomte to the door. He paused to kiss the hand of madame, then joined me by the curb.

"The Carlton, Henri," I ordered.

I sank back into luxurious cushions and mopped my forehead. Was Odette in the house? Had she done a bolt? Was her mother such a woman of steel as to have carried off that situation, and sent two men out of the way, knowing that her daughter had fled from her into the streets of London?

I glanced sidewise at the elderly guest who had been so strangely wished on me. I should have been proud of him under ordinary circumstances; he certainly looked an aristocrat. He was chatting pleasantly, and I was nodding and smiling as though I heard. He wished to buy some flowers, he said. We went out of our way to Piccadilly, where I knew that a florist kept late hours. Would monsieur mind getting out with him—his English was very little? I had the pleasure of ordering a resplendent basket of flowers sent to Mademoiselle Seravin. The vicomte's manner was subtly significant; he wished not only to charm Odette but to convey to me that he had the right to charm her.

I had the story clear now. Odette had fled from this man and this mother-made marriage, and had fled again when overtaken. But the vicomte obviously knew nothing of flights, nor of the girl's repugnance. He hummed a cheerful chanson as we reentered the automobile, and asked for a candy store. None was open, but he sent a beribboned box of chocolates that cost him three pounds from the kiosk in the lobby of the hotel.

He was interesting at dinner. He had a pleasant wit and seemed younger than his years except when he lifted either arm suddenly. He visibly winced then, but he made no admissions about rheumatism. Once he got into serious trouble. He stopped eating, passed an entire course, and finally excused himself on the plea that he must

send a telegram. I was sure that something had got underneath the plate which held his false, white, even teeth and was giving him agony. He came back, stately, smiling, and ate with a good appetite.

We sipped our coffee beneath the palms. He spoke frankly now of the impending marriage. Mademoiselle—he smiled indulgently—had had the whim for a London trousseau; all such whims should be indulged; the charming fantasies of women should be encouraged. Did I not agree? And madame, too, had a whim. It was delightful when ladies hold years at bay by indulging the impulse of the moment, was it not? She had suggested that he and she should follow and surprise the daughter.

He had a self-satisfied smile. He was confident that the daughter would be overjoyed to see him. How that Spartan mother must have lied and cajoled, I thought; and on my word I was sorry for the vicomte. Beneath his graceful cynicism and the hard egotism of his engaging manner I thought I could see some genuine feeling. It was monstrous, abhorrent that he should have fallen in love with a girl hardly of age; and, of course, he was ridiculous; but I blamed the mother, not him.

I saw him into a taxi, and again felt sorry for him when he smiled blithely on me and lifted his hat. I walked over to my near-by club, wondering if French mothers really had the same control over their daughters as before the war and whether marriages of convenience continued among a people who had been so shocked and scared. It was incredible.

"Some mothers have not changed," I said to myself, "but all daughters have."

I called up my manservant at my chambers. Monsieur LeCroix, he informed me, had burst in much excited and had searched my rooms from end to end without so much as saying "By your leave."

"Searched the rooms, Jamison—what for?"

"He didn't say right out, sir," Jamison answered in his level voice, "but he talked to himself. I gathered, sir, he was looking for a lady."

I went straight to LeCroix's house, where a trembling Jacques opened to me. His eyes appeared to make fantastic trips in and out of their sockets. He stared into the darkness over my shoulders.

"Go, Monsieur Roke, go!" he stuttered. "Monsieur LeCroix will kill you." He rolled his "r's" till they boomed like a small distant drum.

"Kill me, Jacques—Why?"

"Oh, sir, I hope"—again he peered out—"you have brought her back."

"I have not been looking for her, Jacques. I have been dining the vicomte."

Jacques shook his head mournfully.

"That is your cunning, Monsieur LeCroix says. Forgive me that I speak plainly. If he should come out, there will be murder. Go, monsieur, I implore!"

He caught at my coat tails as I brushed past him, but dropped them with a frightened cry. I was sure that he had grasped the golden heel and thought it a pistol butt. I heard retreating footsteps above, below as I went to LeCroix's den. The whole household had been listening. I flung open the door.

My partner, purple-faced, his eyes bulging, jumped from a chair, stared at me for an instant, then deliberately kicked a footstool clear across the room.

"What have you done with her?" he cried in a terrible voice.

"Don't be a fool!" I said sharply.

"You have betrayed my house, my confidence!" he bellowed. "A mother weeps upstairs in the arms of my wife for a daughter who is not. Shame is on my house!" He snarled at me as he dragged a paper from his pocket. "And you exult—you laugh!" He held my forgotten note up before my eyes and struck it with the back of his great hand. "You have disgraced yourself," he shouted—"accéléra that you are!"

"You will have a stroke," I warned.

I sat down and lighted a cigarette. He went on raving. From time to time I interjected a word of denial or explanation, and puffed away while the storm raged. Even in fiercest eruption, LeCroix was a logical volcano. He acutely marshaled the damning evidence: I had obviously been in secret correspondence with this unhappy girl. I had slipped back to London. My confederate had lured him—LeCroix—away from the house under pretext of selling ships over a dinner table at a hotel far away in the country. I had ordered his



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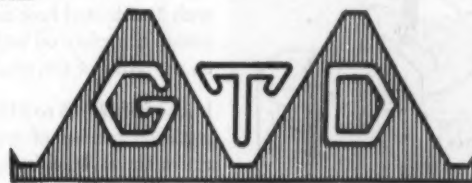
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auto—LeCroix's own auto; Henri had confessed this. My deceived and miserable victim had dressed herself as for a grand ball of ceremony. At a fortunate moment the injured mother had arrived. I had brazened it out and tried to establish an alibi by taking Monsieur le Vicomte to dinner. But the frightened daughter, overcome by conscience, unable to face a deceived mother, had fled panic-stricken. She had gone, of course, to the rendezvous. To her I was returning when I had completed this impudent farce of appearing again at the house which I had betrayed. Where was she? Where had I intended to take her in that costume of the ball? Had I meant to bring her back before he—LeCroix—returned? Or had I—

At this point the flow of red-hot lava gave place to the misty vapors of sentiment. LeCroix all but cried and his voice trembled to a stop. He listened now. I found it unexpectedly easy to convince him. In the end he cooled so abruptly that I almost fancied I could hear the hiss of red-hot iron plunged into water.

"Madame Seravin was right," he muttered with an accent of despair. "It is now of the most serious." He shook his big head. "I hoped it was just a lark of America." He buried his fat cheeks in his hands, and his eyes looked as though they were about to drop great tears.

"But this is awful," he said. "She went out alone into the night. She flew from the sound of the voice of the mother who has loved and cherished her. It is a stain on my house. It is a discredit to la patrie. Her mother and my wife mourn for a girl who has disgraced herself forever. She is imbecile! She is mad! A great match! A splendid match! He is rich and old, and she must soon be a widow." He flung out his hands as though repulsing, now and forever, this daring daughter of France.

"She did right to bolt," I said bluntly. "To marry her to that galvanized corpse would be a crime."

He sprang to his feet and walked up and down with that catlike, graceful stride that marks all the large-framed stout Frenchmen of the south.

"You do not understand," he said in a voice of pity. "It is your barbarous American view of marriage. These things are so crudely managed there. A girl, a silly girl, is allowed to carry out her mad whims without regard to the wishes of wiser and older relatives. It is impossible for you," he declared vehemently, "to understand the volcanic act of this disgraceful girl, and what it means to a French mother."

"I understand," I said, "that you have searched my rooms."

"A thousand pardons—I was excited." I saw him going toward his cigar box to make a conciliatory offer to me. In self-defense I hastily took a cigar from my own case.

"Has she friends in London?" I asked. "None!" He spat out the words. "Not one!"

"Except in this house," I corrected. He flung down the ignited match without lighting his cigar.

"She has none here," he said. He swept a solemn gesture as though mourning one lately dead.

"Yes—one!" I cried. "Does she speak English?"

LeCroix looked sullenly at me and seated himself heavily.

"Monsieur and Madame Seravin were not happy," he explained. "He went to New Orleans when Odette was a child of seven. He took her. He was my friend, but—well, he was a firebrand like me. And madame—you have seen madame. It was fire and ice. He died in New Orleans about as the war opened and Odette was sent back to her mother."

He lighted his cigar at last, avoiding my surprised eyes.

"You never told me that mademoiselle had been brought up in the United States."

An inimitable large gesture of the hands, then, "She was a creation of the imagination," he said—"a creation of art. It began in jest. Madame LeCroix and I imagined an ideal and confronted you with it. When you boasted of American girls we answered with the perfect French girl, and we called her Odette." He sighed heavily. "We are punished." He flung away his just lighted cigar.

"She knows then," I said, reassured, "how to take care of herself."

"She has learned in your terrible country," he cried, "how to break a mother's heart."

I made no answer. I was sorry for mother and daughter. Madame had lived in isolation in a small French town, unchanged in ideas, unaffected by a world upset; and she had thought to apply to an American-bred girl the customs and practices of her own youth.

"The girl deceived Madame LeCroix and me," LeCroix said. "She was charming, Roke. She was all that we had imagined, in appearance, in manner. She was elegant. She had esprit. The visit had been arranged. We expected her with pleasure. We received her with delight. She concealed from us that the vicomte's offer had come on the eve of her departure; that the journey had been canceled; that she had fled secretly from her mother's house. Her mother telegraphed that she was engaged and asked that we guard her carefully."

"And so," I said, "you sent me to Plymouth."

"Pardon, Roke, it was our duty."

"She must have foreseen that she would be followed."

"She did not expect it," LeCroix denied. "She left a letter with her mother. I have seen it. Her flight would convince the vicomte, she said, that his suit was hopeless, and would prove to her mother that a daughter could no longer be delivered as baggage at an old man's door. Do not smile!" he cried in a voice of thunder.

"The letter was of the kind one learns to write in your cursed country. But the girl did not know her mother. Oh, no, she did not know! A girl's whim; a London trowseau; a few weeks of freedom with her trusted friends, the LeCroix's—so said smiling madame to an infatuated vicomte. How if they followed to London, to delight an unsuspecting fiancée and secure the invaluable taste of the bridegroom?"

"He is a connoisseur in ladies' clothes then?" I asked with a curl of my lip.

"He is not without experience," was the dry answer.

"And you support this monstrous marriage?"

LeCroix hunched his great shoulders. "No Frenchman," he answered, "supports a revolting daughter. The family is our unit. It is sacred."

"But when she comes back, LeCroix, of course, you—her mother—you take her back."

"If her flight is known, certainly not," he cried with decision—"unless she agrees to enter a convent. That is all that is left to her. She cannot hope to marry. Her mother cannot be expected to forgive and to live with a daughter so unnatural."

"A shame—a burning shame!" I flared. "Justice!" he answered. "She throws away everything—honor, reputation, a great marriage. Monsieur le Vicomte is of the high aristocracy; she, like us, is of the bourgeoisie." LeCroix clenched his fists and shook them in the air. "A great marriage!" he cried, his voice trembling as he reflected on the glories from which the girl had fled. "He will die soon. She could be a queen—a queen of society in Paris. Bah! She could not put up with him for one month, one year at the most—absurd! But we are merciful, Roke." He turned and added in a lower tone, "We give her one chance."

"Oh, do you?" I asked, skeptically puffing at my cigar and thinking hard. It had been clear to me for some time that it must be I who must find this girl. I was wondering how to set about it.

"Yes," said LeCroix with solemn emphasis, "the tender heart of a mother shows mercy. If the girl comes back now, quickly, before the vicomte discovers that she has disappeared, her mother's arms and my front door will be open to her."

"On condition, I suppose," I said, "that she marries this old man."

"Certainly."

"If I find her," I said hastily, "I shan't bring her back to that."

"You will not look for her," said my partner, eying me straight. "It's not a matter that you can interfere in without compromising the daughter of your partner's oldest friend. I have only to put it like that to know that you—to say it quite bluntly—will mind your own business."

"There is no argument against that," I admitted, but I did not alter my decision.

I found myself speculating as to what to do with Odette, if and when I found her. But I dropped unprofitable reflections, for the door opened to admit Madame Seravin. She wore a rough gray woolen wrapper and her hair was in slight disorder, but she was

(Continued on Page 73)

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The Round Oak Folks

Make Good Goods Only



(Continued from Page 70)

so erect and there was such a splendid hard dignity about her that I quickly forgot her dishabille.

"Pardon my intrusion, messieurs," she said, bowing. She seated herself in the chair which the surprised LeCroix placed for her. "I must know from monsieur's own lips that he protected the honor of the house of LeCroix."

I stared at her blankly. I could not think what she meant.

"A painful family circumstance," madame went on in her stately, composed way, "compelled me to make a sudden demand on Monsieur Charteris. I felt that the partner of my husband's old friend would not fail me in my hour of need."

"I was pleased to be of service, madame," I answered. "I did my best to entertain the vicomte."

"I thank you, monsieur. I knew that I could trust not only to your courtesy but to your wit." She glanced at me apprehensively. "I am sure it was not needed to warn monsieur to maintain a discreet silence."

I put my hand across my chest and deeply inclined my head. It was not done in derision—mechanically I adopted a mannerism of my partner. It was pitiful to me to see this mother, outwardly so calm, maintaining so sternly the dignity of her ideals. They might be wrong; they might seem to me futile; she might care more that her daughter's secret should be kept than what happened to the girl; but her strength and her composure commanded respect. My grandiloquent flourish was construed to mean that I had maintained the honor of the house of Seravin, and had not hinted to the vicomte that mademoiselle was missing. Madame bent again her rigid back, and again expressed profound thanks.

"Everything is well then," she declared with a startling change of voice. "No awkward explanations are necessary beyond the confines of the family. I consider Monsieur Charteris of the family. Mademoiselle Seravin has returned."

"What?" I cried, and I know I looked as though I doubted her.

"Grâce à bon Dieu!" murmured LeCroix, and he drew a breath so deep that it sounded like the sigh of a blacksmith's bellows. Then he rolled out half a dozen questions. Madame Seravin sat silent until he became quiet. Madame then looked with profound appeal into the eyes of my partner.

"It means much inconvenience to you, Monsieur LeCroix," she said, "and to your household—but especially to you." Her voice, her manner implored pardon. "My girl came back by the way she had gone." She bent her head and there was an instant of impressive silence. "Alas"—Madame Seravin tapped her forehead with her forefinger—"we can only have pity for her. She is ill. She is delicious. Her strange actions are thus explained. We have sent for the doctor. We have put her to bed."

Madame's voice trembled, but I caught a quick exchange of glances. I detected two pairs of eyes darting at me as though to see how I was impressed by this news. I thought of those twinkling feet, in which were no signs of fever; of that cool voice murmuring instructions to Jacques, in which was no delirium. I knew that mademoiselle had not come back.

"Odette has scarlet fever."

"Mon Dieu," exclaimed LeCroix, stepping back, "but that is infectious!"

Was he deceived? Was he acting for my benefit? It was so perfectly done that I doubted.

"It is the hand of Providence," said Madame Seravin. "The disease is not yet in the infectious stage. Madame your wife agrees with me that you should not be exposed to risk. Ah, yes"—she turned her head—"it is Jacques. He has placed your portmanteau in the hall. It is packed."

"My portmanteau? But—but—"

"It's the wish of your good wife," said Madame Seravin. "She says that affairs of much moment claim you each hour. She begs that you shall not expose yourself. In this country it is not legal that you go out into the world every day from a house that holds an infectious case. She thinks that you will agree with her; that it is better you should go to the Savoy hotel."

"Ah! Ah!" cried the nimble-witted LeCroix. "The vicomte's hotel! And I must entertain and console the vicomte while his fiancée is recovering."

"Is it not well to do that?" Madame Seravin asked composedly. "It is a good

hotel, they say, and there will be company and distraction for you, Monsieur LeCroix."

LeCroix nodded and turned to me as Jacques appeared at the door with his light overcoat.

"Come on, Roke," he said.

A voice from above, softly modulated but carrying, conveyed a tender message, and a good night from madame to her husband. He gallantly kissed his hand upward as we passed through the hall.

"I hope," I said to Madame Seravin, "for a speedy recovery for mademoiselle."

I stared at her in wonder, almost believing that Odette was upstairs ill.

"Monsieur," she answered with gratitude in her voice, "has been all that I expected of him to-night. I know that his discretion will continue."

"Rely upon me, madame," I said, and by this time Jacques had whistled up a taxi.

In the taxi I asked LeCroix if he had believed madame for at least one instant.

"I never disbelieve a lady," was the response. "In these delicate matters of the feminine it is the exquisite esprit of the woman which intuitively knows what to do. I was told to go—I went." At my door he solemnly adjured me: "If disgrace has come to the family of Seravin under my roof it is the duty of my friend and partner to help to carry out the brilliant conception of the heartbroken mother. Good night, Roke."

I explained to my sleepy man that Monsieur LeCroix had been inflicted with a sudden attack of madness, but had quite recovered, and that the lady whom he fancied he had mislaid was safe at his house under the care of his wife. I shot the bolt of my sitting-room door, extracted the golden-heeled slipper from my pocket and made use of it as a paper weight. It kept the breeze from the open window from blowing away the fragments which I had scooped up from the grate in Odette's room. I pieced these patiently together, becoming more and more surprised as letters and words grew before my eyes. A wine merchant's bill rendered to Miss Seravin lay in front of me—a bill for six pints of champagne and for a hundred cigarettes. The wine was of a well-known brand, of the delicious nineteen-hundred-and-four vintage. Its price was staggering; that of the cigarettes was twenty-two shillings and sixpence. The parcel was to be sent by rail to Miss Angela Egerton, Hen-leaze House, Folkestone.

"Decidedly," I thought, "this Mademoiselle Odette, this jeune fille, so demure, so quietly brought up, knows a thing or two."

I went to bed with the conviction that Odette was sound asleep at Folkestone, and that on the morrow I should easily find her.

I FOUND the next morning that LeCroix had already arrived at the office. He dragged me into his private room, banged the door, placed two great hands on my shoulders and said with tears in his voice that Madame Seravin had a mother's heart behind a breast of marble. He had been summoned at dawn, and had slipped guiltily into his own house. He—but he was forced to stop by a yawn which disclosed a red tongue clear to the roots.

"A strange, beautiful sight is the sunrise," he said dreamily after the long full stop of this portentous gape. Madame, he said, could no longer endure suspense or remain inactive. She was prepared to do anything, to sacrifice everything, if she could hold once again in her arms this wandering daughter. She had even suggested the police.

"Odette is an alien," I said. "She must register everywhere. They will find her in a day."

"Bah!" LeCroix looked at me and snorted. "And so you would have her prosecuted, and the case repeated in every paper in England and France. She has no identity book, and she was not registered with the aliens' office."

I looked my surprise on hearing this.

"Could I guess," LeCroix asked with ironical emphasis, "that I entertained a wolf in the dress of an innocent lambkin? Could I foresee that she would tear from her back her virginal robe and flee to the wilds when she heard the voice of a mother? If she had remained quietly in my house no one would have troubled her. The truth is, Roke, my boy, I forgot all about the identity book."

He plumped down in his chair, put his elbows on his desk, framed in his hands his great face, now more like a tomato than a

ripe Tokay grape—he had gone from tawny to red—and stared at me as one who craves help in personal trouble. The truth flashed on me.

"You, too, would be prosecuted," I exclaimed. He wagged his head in confirmation.

"A householder who harbors an unregistered alien," I said with a grin. "But it might not be prison, my poor friend. It might only be a fine."

"Bah! It is not prison or the money. It is the notoriety."

"I have always thought you a shrinking violet," I asserted with what I pretended was a winning smile.

"I cannot afford notoriety," he snapped. He leaped to his feet and twirled me round with a powerful clutch of his hand on my arm. "We, you and I, cannot afford it!"

he hissed in my ear. "Are you paying income tax in two countries?" he demanded as though certain of a negative answer. "Are you giving up all that these English sharks claim, and paying in the United States too?"

"Yes," I retorted with offensive consciousness of virtue.

LeCroix backed away and stared at me. He was convinced, for he said, "Ah, well, you have no wife. You can afford to be honest. But I—" He flung up his hands. "Notoriety," he burst out bitterly, "brings ferrets of the treasury, French ferrets, English ferrets. They gnaw their way through books of account and wriggle away with the last franc in the till." His voice sank to a hoarse whisper. "And they send you to jail. No! No! No police, thank you! I told madame of private inquiry agents."

"Impossible!" I objected. "That way leads to scandal and blackmail."

"Pachutt!" LeCroix clicked. "I know that." He stared at me from solemn, questioning eyes. "I do not understand the American point of view. Would an American consider this misguided girl as still eligible?"

I think that my answer was a masterpiece of tact.

"It is an escapade," I said. "It does not reflect seriously on Odette. And yet a serious American would seriously hesitate before making serious proposals."

We were speaking in French, and the word serious in that language has an even more serious significance than in English. LeCroix pondered my oracular response and then asked if I meant that an American would neither flirt too lightly with her nor permit himself too deep an interest. I agreed that he had expressed my meaning better than I could myself. I understood his drift now. The inquiry agent meant me. Here was huge luck. I had been wondering how I was to get away. I pretended to be lost in deep reflection.

"If I could spare the time"—I thought aloud; but I shook my head and turned as toward my desk.

"You can! You shall!" LeCroix had been pacing the room so fast as to suggest to me a well-groomed but nervous tiger. Now he caught my shoulders again. "I will do the work of ten. Be content. Go! Find her!"

"You refused my offer last night."

"Bah! Twelve hours ago."

"Then send the vicomte home."

"He is not a schoolboy to be given a railway ticket and labeled," LeCroix rejoined. "Leave him to the mother. She must detach him."

"But she will detach him?"

LeCroix earnestly promised complete freedom of choice to Odette, and assured me with fiery vehemence that she should not be the victim of indirect pressure.

"I will find her," I said.

LeCroix, deeply grateful, wrung my two hands in portentous silence. To my request for a photograph he answered with a grimace.

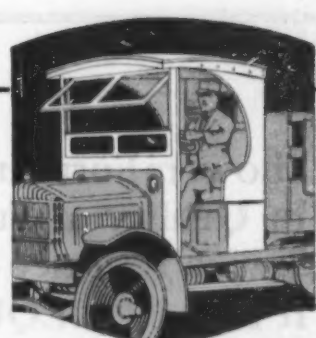
"There was one on her passport, I suppose. She did not forget that or her purse. She is a little cat for cleverness. She has gray eyes, oval face, dark-brown hair and whiter skin than most French girls from the Midi. Not fair, you understand, but not olive-brown, and she has color which glows like a soft blush in the evening."

"You observe minutely."

"What is worth observation commands it," was his sententious rejoinder. "Her voice is pleasant. She speaks English without accent, they say. I am no judge."

"Any marks, any peculiarities?" I questioned briskly.

LeCroix grinned at me.



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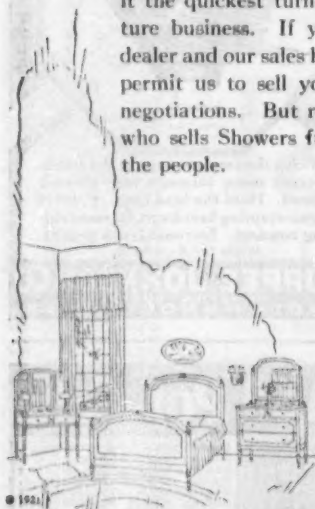
A PIECE of Showers furniture is fundamentally a utility—not an extravagant luxury. People who can afford to disregard price, and who can buy the most luxurious furniture, have no business considering Showers furniture. Showers furniture was never intended for millionaires—it was designed to fill the needs of the great American masses, of the people in general to whom a dollar represents one hundred cents' worth of effort. Frankly, it is built with price primarily in mind and every legitimate cost cutting device known to manufacturers has been employed by the Showers factories to the limit. As a result, Showers furniture today, on a basis of dollar for dollar invested, represents unusual value.

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To the man who wants to furnish his modest home in perfectly good taste and at a price that he can afford to pay, Showers furniture is a god-send.

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The price at which Showers furniture sells gives it the quickest turnover ever known in the furniture business. If you are a legitimate furniture dealer and our sales hook-up in your territory would permit us to sell you, we would be glad to open negotiations. But remember one thing—any man who sells Showers furniture must keep faith with the people.



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President

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"I can say," he answered, "that she has no strawberry mark on her left shoulder, and most certainly there are no interlaced hearts or national flags tattooed on her right arm."

"Any little tricks, any mannerisms?" "She has learned Yankee aplomb," he answered. "She looks French, but acts American. She lifts her head quick when you speak and looks at you with great interest, and she smiles a little. She is a charming listener, and when you talk sometimes she traces little squares and circles with her forefinger. She stands out in any crowd for the elegance of her air. And the way she carries her head! I was proud to walk by her side. In Bond Street I fancied myself her father and smiled on her with paternal affection."

"You deceive yourself," I said, laughing. "By the side of any pretty girl you do not look a father."

He straightened out and began to smile, but the yawn conquered.

"Decidedly," he said after a long instant, "this rising with the dawn opens the jaws."

"I will begin the search to-night," I said, pretending to dash for my desk.

"What, you will waste a day?"

"Oh, if you think —"

"I do think."

He opened a telegram which came at the moment.

"That girl is bad luck to us," he thumped the desk so hard that the pen-rack jumped an inch. "The Odette is on the Scilly rocks. No lives lost."

"I am sorry," I said. "She is fully insured."

"The girl is not," he replied. "Go! Find her before she becomes a total loss."

I taxied to my chambers whistling *Malbrough s'en va-t-en Guerre* in sheer delight. A second little unexpected vacation, this time on the sunny, bracing eastern seaside of England; that pleasantest of holidays, one with an object; that pleasantest of objects, a girl. No pretense at scientific collecting of moths or sea shells or seaweeds, but just a girl; one worth collecting by all accounts. I burst into my rooms to find my man, Jamison, nearly naked, hitting my punch ball with the celerity of a cat and the vigor of a bulldog. He gave a final tap, and then without embarrassment delivered himself thus:

"Ain't it a funny thing, Mr. Charteris, when I was Over There it seemed just like 'eving to be dreaming I was back in a old soft billet waiting on gentlemen like yourself; and now 'ere I am, and I punches all the morning and I raises the weights and I trifles with the dumb-bells and I swings the clubs, and when evening comes I'm that nervous for want of exercise as I can't put the buttons in your shirt without me 'ands trembling like I was a 'isterical girl, and when I 'ands you an entrée I feel sure as it's going to drop."

"That's overexercise, Jamison," I said in the same friendly way in which he had addressed me—a remarkable change from his sleek morning-and-evening manner. "A drawing master never hammers a nail for fear he may spoil the delicacy and precision of his touch. A man who handles collar buttons and dinner plates for a living must not build up muscles to guide a plow."

Jamison, streaming with sweat, sat down on the only chair in the room and looked reflectively up into my face.

"Life is rum," he said in perplexed sadness. "My mind hates work. My muscles ache for it. In the trenches I dreamed of this." He looked about forlornly. "Now I've got it, just as I dreamed about it, just as it used to be in them old days, and in you comes and you gives me the word. The plow—that's it! Look at that, Mr. Charteris." He flexed an arm. Muscles rippled beneath a silk skin and biceps made a lump like a tiny torpedo. "And me 'avin' a palate too, and that fond of delicate food."

He jumped to his feet as one who wakes from a dream. He became the correct supple-tongued valet, begging pardon with a gentle dignity.

"I am not displeased with you, Jamison," I said, "but since I have seen your arms in action I am ashamed they have been wasted on me. Go and make hay. Farmers are crying for such as you."

I counted out a month's pay and something over. He begged piteously, but I was firm. He looked me up and down.

"Your muscles is catgut," he said. "You punches like a goods-wagon buffer as makes the whole train shiver. 'Ow about you and the plow? If you'll take it on I will."

"That sounds fair," I argued, "but it isn't. My headwork is useful, but you are only pampering me." I glanced at my watch. "I will not take on the plow, Jamison," I said, "but as a last mark of regard for you I will take you on."

"Without gloves," he cried vindictively as he jumped up.

"That would be childish," I said. "Neither of us can do business with a black eye—six ounce."

He came for me. He was stripped and I was not; and I had a face to guard, and he was too angry to care for his; but I was fifteen pounds heavier, had a longer reach and far better training; so I soon laid him out. When I came from my bath he was staggering about laying out my clothes.

"A last favor, sir," he said humbly as he took up the suitcase toward which I had glanced.

"Seaside Kit, Jamison, please."

When he had finished I gave him a reference as the most tactful and efficient of valets, and sent him away. As I soon afterward found, he went straight to making trouble for me. I wrapped my golden-heeled slipper in the nearest of parcels and slipped it into my bag. Of course I thought of Cinderella. I hoped to have some fun with Odette about the old story.

Toward midafternoon I was walking the Lees at Folkestone. Decorous old gentlemen toddled, matronly ladies sauntered with dignity, the salty breeze blew with a delicate reticence, the declining sun politely kissed discreetly curling wave tops which were just white enough to look cool without suggesting danger or seasickness. Folkestone, after its incredible war tumult, had quickly settled back into the old-time ordered precision. The only note of gayety which responded to my irresponsible mood was heard in the occasional laughter of young officers. They strolled in groups, always with tailor-made or white-flanneled girls, who laughed with them and made much of them. Some of the men were maimed and some were pallid and some hobbled, and without the blue bands on their arms one would have known that they came from convalescent hospitals. I looked in vain for a girl with American aplomb and a French dress.

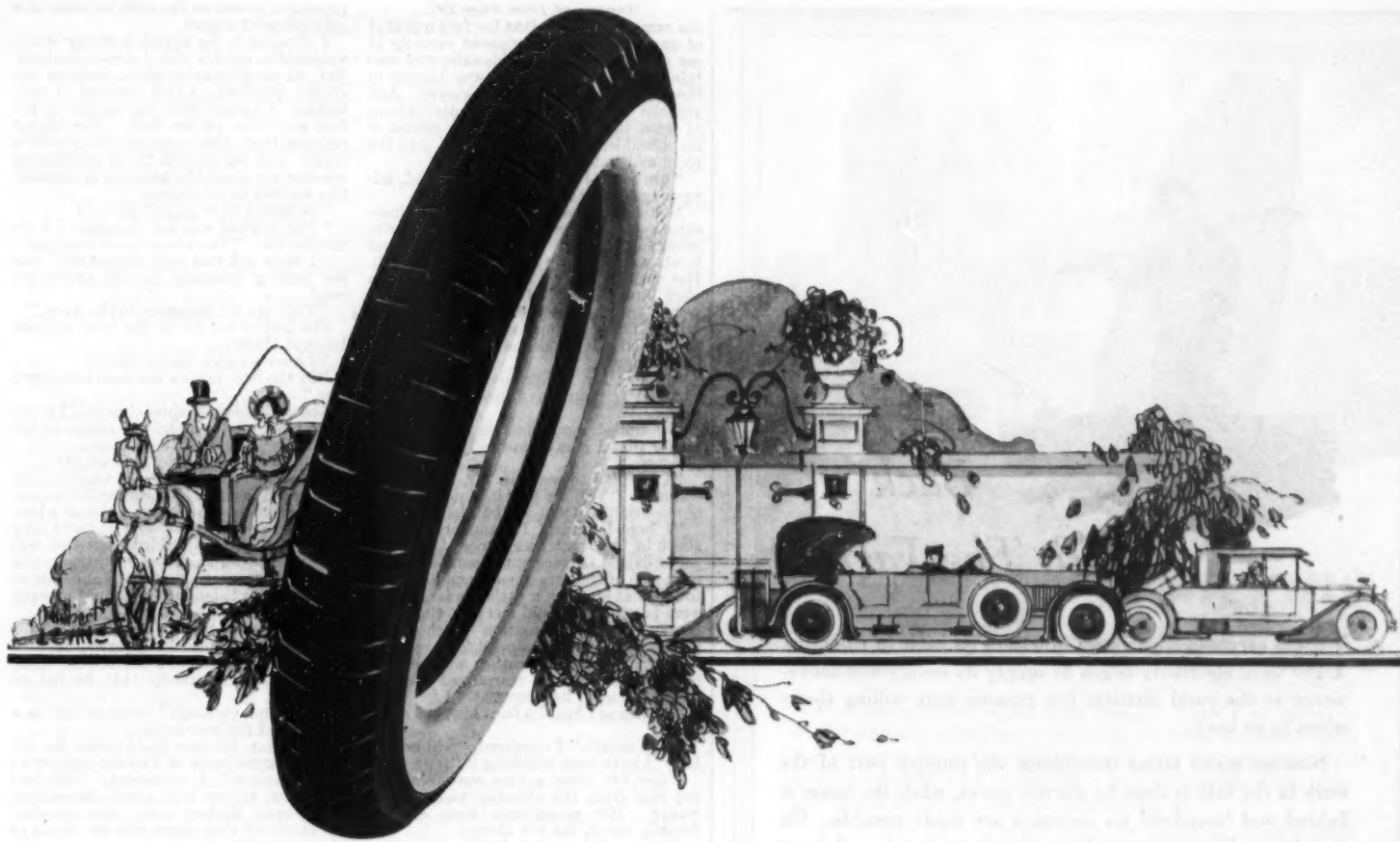
I reconnoitered when I came to Hen-leaze House—meaning that I walked past with furtive inspecting eyes. It was like all the rest in the row, and was no doubt described in the landlady's advertisement as containing superior apartments. Its doors and windows all stood invitingly open and seemed to mock my sleuthlike methods. I flung them aside and rang the bell. The landlady answered my summons—a comfortable lady, obviously fast regaining flesh after lean years, and there was neither mystery nor evasion in her matter-of-fact invitation to wait if I liked; Miss Egerton had ordered tea at five and would be in at any minute. When I asked how long Miss Egerton had been staying there the landlady said that she heard a bell, and she hustled away. I was left to myself in what was evidently a public sitting room. I seated myself inside the open window and scanned the Lees, following with my eyes all women who were alone, most of whom on nearer view turned out to be nursemaids.

Did you ever take notice that when the average French illustrator draws seriously an Englishwoman he makes her look French? And American and English artists draw Frenchwomen to look like those of their own countries? And that Japanese draftsmen give Occidentals an absurd touch of the Orient? Nationality is so elusive in its indications as to defy alike the artist's pencil and writer's pen; but the eye of one who sees the living subject can hardly be deceived. That is, unless that subject is international. One extreme of Odette was international; her foot belonged in its shapely elegance equally to France and to the United States. Could surroundings ever so slightly affect a national nose, or delicately deflect the curve of a lip, or teach an eyelid a different droop? Had Odette's American childhood left some faint hint in her features of the United States?

These speculations were checked by the sight of a girl heading straight for the house across the Lees, and instantly I said "Odette!"

The girl was unmistakably French from her neck to the sole of her foot, which I was sure would fit the golden-heeled slipper in my pocket; but I was surprised when

(Continued on Page 76)



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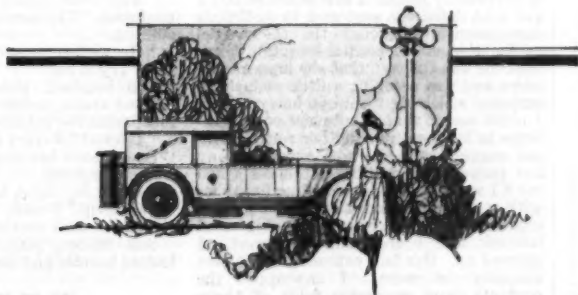
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Back To The Farm

IT was easy enough to urge others to go back to the farm, but until electricity began to supply its energy and convenience in the rural districts few persons were willing themselves to go back.

Now on many farms throughout the country part of the work in the field is done by electric power, while the house is lighted and household conveniences are made possible. On such farms, life is different from what it used to be. A large part of the hardest work has been lifted from the shoulders of agriculture, and the back-to-the-farm movement has been accelerated.

There are 6,500,000 families living on "farms" in this country. The arduous lives of 2,000,000 of these families have been made more endurable by the introduction of electrical appliances, and their labor problems have been partly solved by the "burden-bearer," electricity.

Extension of such service to the farms not now enjoying it means that vast new capital must be invested. The electric light and power industry is regulated by the States, and the wages paid to the capital which must be employed in the industry likewise are fixed. As such wages are fixed fairly, more capital will be forthcoming to permit the extension of service to the farms, and city homes, and industries still calling for it.

Irrigation of millions of acres of land by electric pumping shows the importance of electricity to the development of agriculture. Utilization of electric power for many farm chores and tasks has helped solve the farm labor question and has reduced the cost of production of food stuffs, thus aiding in the battle against the High Cost of Living.

Extension of service to individual farms and farming communities requires large plant and distribution system investments, money for which can be "hired" only when companies are enabled to earn a return sufficient to attract additional money in competition with other industries also seeking new capital.

NATIONAL ELECTRIC LIGHT ASSOCIATION

(Continued from Page 74)

she came close to see that her face was that of an American. She glanced casually at me as she crossed the sidewalk, and certainly no fear of pursuit was hidden in those candid, straight-looking eyes. And yet she answered LeCroix's description; at least there was nothing to render it inapplicable. She came straight into the room and touched the bell.

"Are you Miss Egerton?" I asked, advancing toward her.

Neither startled nor alarmed, she pirouetted swiftly on her low heel with an elastic swing full of grace; her brows, marked and level, were slightly lifted—that was all. Her vivid eyes were fixed on me with an alert intentness which recalled LeCroix's words, and they were gray. But they certainly belonged to an American girl. That conviction was deepened as I looked into her full face.

"I am Mr. Charteris—Mr. Rokeby Charteris. You have heard of me of course."

She smiled a welcome so gracious and kindly that I glowed inwardly from sheer pleasure.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Charteris," she said. "You are just in time for a cup of tea—that is, if you don't disdain."

"I hoped for it," I stammered, taken aback by this frank acceptance of me.

She darted a glance, surprised, I think, by my touch of embarrassment, and it seemed to me that she was a little kinder, if that were possible. I could feel that the brave command of the situation which I had planned had already slipped from me.

"What beautiful weather we are having," she said as she rearranged the tray which the maid had brought. I felt more confidence as I heard a faint hint of French accent.

"The sunset," I answered, "will be perfect. I have been watching it."

I saw her move a vase containing one red rose from the chimney piece to the waiter. Her movements were extraordinarily quick, but not abrupt.

"I hope I have not kept you waiting long."

"Oh, no! The beautiful view—that is—"

She smiled encouragement and asked if I thought the window would be too drafty. I moved the tray, and presently we were sitting companionably on either side of a small table, our faces turned seaward. I scanned her covertly. Face, figure, movements—all would answer to the Frenchman's description, but I could see no hint of France in her features. Whenever I looked away from her I was sure that I was in the presence of Odette, and each time that I looked again I was less sure that she was American; but I knew that signs of nationality leap at you at first glance but disappear on analysis.

She was so completely at ease and so soon made me feel so entirely at home that there was no rushing at conversation. We did our duty by the view, the sunset, the place, the people, the links; but sometimes we were silent for seconds together. I soon detected that she was studying me as I was her, but when our eyes met hers held without confusion or apparent curiosity. Her complexion was fairer than I had expected Odette's to be, yet LeCroix had prepared me for that. She had distinction. She had charm. She had frank manners. She turned her head with the quickness of an English robin swaying on the tip of a spruce's crowning twig. She listened to my banalities as though they were worth hearing. I watched her well-shaped, capable hands. They sometimes rested in her lap, but they traced no little circles or squares. But Odette could not be expected to do that every time she sat down.

As we sipped and talked the impression of nationality faded. I saw in her at last a girl who definitely answered to LeCroix's description, and I thought that the obvious explanation of her cordial hospitality was that she was Odette; that she knew me by name and was enjoying a little comedy of suspense which she was in no hurry to end. I could see no hint of mischief or of challenge in her eyes, nor did her restful manner suggest that she was expecting any but conventional words. When she asked me if I was staying for some time I told her with a straight look that my visit had an object. Her frank return gaze expressed interest, and I drew out my parcel. I glanced up. Her face expressed a pleasant curiosity—no more. I unwrapped the contents from successive folds of tissue

paper and placed on the table between us a golden-heeled slipper.

I detected in her eyelids a flicker which vanished so quickly that I almost doubted. But the unmistakable slight flush on her cheeks remained. I said nothing. I only looked. I looked from the slipper to her foot and then to her face. She almost resented that. Her brows knitted in a little frown, and she seemed to be considering whether she should be annoyed or amused. She decided to be amused.

"It should be of glass," she said. "The original was fur, not glass." I reminded her. "Too warm for midsummer."

"I have not two ugly stepsisters," was her smiling comment as she shook her head.

"They are not necessary to the story." She looked me full in the face, and she laughed blithely.

"I have no wish for a prince." "In the new version she does not marry him."

She pretended disappointment. "There is no plot," she complained, malice in her bright eyes. They challenged me.

"There is heaps of plot," I told her.

She settled back and closed her eyes, but she peeped through long curling lashes and her lips flickered to a smile. I was at a loss, and I showed it, no doubt. I had told fairy tales to my sister's children, but that was poor practice for this mocking listener, who looked so distractingly pretty and was so intently eager to laugh at me. But I plunged in nervously.

"Once upon a time," I began, "there was a white-faced gentlemanly ogre. He had beautiful manners and a fine delicate hand and a palate so dainty that he fed on girls."

"Oh, how exciting!" came to me in a murmur. I felt encouraged.

"He was far too fashionable to use seven-leagued boots or knobby clubs or to look ferocious," I continued. "He had wonderful tailors and seven shoemakers and eleven washerwomen, who starched his shirts till they shone like the shield of Sir Galahad."

My listener opened her eyes and nodded. Her direct, disconcerting gaze tied my tongue for an instant, but I struggled on:

"He had four heralds. When he had marked down a girl he sent these heralds in splendid robes and with fanfares of trumpets to the girl's mother. One carried the coronet of a vicomte on a plush velvet cushion. Another bore a long roll of parchment. It was the ogre's pedigree, and it went straight back in a direct line to the original ogre, Goliath."

"But he was a giant," protested Miss Egerton.

"You forget," I chided. "He may have been large, but he wanted to eat up little boys."

"I'm sorry," she murmured penitently. "The third herald carried title deeds to châteaux and leagues on leagues of land, and town houses in Paris and London. The other one had a bagful of diamonds and rubies and emeralds all set in platinum and gold; and tiaras and necklaces; yes, and ropes of great mill-white pearls all matched and softly gleaming."

"Ah!" Miss Egerton breathed ecstatically.

"You forget," I cautioned severely, "that these were the price of a daughter. The deluded mother, under a spell, would sell her child. And then the ogre would be dressed very beautifully by his four valets, and he would come and kiss the mother's hand and the daughter's cheek. But one girl ran away."

"Oh, how could she?" asked my perverse listener, sitting up straight.

"Because," I explained, "she didn't want to be eaten. And she ran so fast that she dropped her slipper. And then—"

"Yes?" she asked as I stopped short, confused. "The hero came," she prompted, smiling.

"He wished to save her. He can save her. Try it on."

She laughed, picked up the slipper, twisted about, and in a second projected a foot inside the golden-heeled slipper.

"Odette!" I cried triumphantly.

She opened her eyes wide in apparently honest surprise.

I shook my head, laughing. "Own up," I said. "I saw that foot and the gilded heels on the landing last night." She flushed pink, but her eyes still looked wonder and denial.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

CHANGE

(Continued from Page 11)

"Yes, it's Miss Crandall's brother's daughter—the black sheep of the family, I've heard say he was. I think his name was Leonard."

"But you can't give me any information about the property itself?"

Mr. Duggan looked perplexed.

"I can find out for you and let you know."

"I wish you would. Meanwhile I think I'll go down and talk with Miss Crandall herself."

"I'll run you down in my car," offered Mr. Duggan eagerly.

"No, I'll walk, thanks. What is the best place in Edgewater to stay for a few days?"

"I guess the Edgewater Inn's as good as any. That's down Central Avenue a ways."

"Yes, I noticed it as I passed."

Andrew Kennedy again walked out into the autumnal sunlight and down Central Avenue. He stopped at the Edgewater Inn and made arrangements for rooms. He also telephoned to the city and left orders for his chauffeur to bring his car to Edgewater with clothes sufficient for a few days' stay. Then with a tightening of his will he proceeded down Central Avenue to the Crandall place. This time he did not hesitate for either speculation or reminiscence, but pushed open the small gate beside the great iron gates of the main entrance and followed briskly a path that ran beside the driveway to the house.

A withered servant appeared at the door in answer to his ring, and although he recognized the servant it was evident that she did not recognize him. It made him wonder how much he had changed in these twenty years; and thinking of the stripling who had gone forth to win his way in the world so many years ago, he surveyed with dissatisfaction in the long mirror in the hall the man who after twenty years had returned. He had returned ready to achieve his purpose, but so far as appearances went it seemed to him never was there a more commonplace victor. He gazed with profound disgust at the heavy, thickset figure the mirror showed, and the eyes weary, even though they retained unclouded their clear and intense blue. It made him feel curiously old to be back here once more where he had spent all his youth. Through a window at the end of the hall, while he waited, he caught a glimpse of the fishpond so ineradicably engraved upon his memory, and the rose garden in the shelter of which he had once kissed Natalie Crandall, and he thought with bitterness that almost half his life had run its course since then, and now without wife or child, without kindred of any sort and with only his wealth and his power to solace him it seemed a life strangely ill spent.

He waited in the hall, because the withered servant had told him with decision that Miss Crandall was not to be seen; that she saw no one; that, practically an invalid, she rarely left her own room. But his persistence had won him the assurance that he might see Miss Crandall's niece, Miss Sylvia Crandall, if she were to be found.

And then in the mirror that faced him, himself still unseen, he saw Sylvia Crandall descending the staircase that led into the hall. Kennedy gasped. She was the reincarnation of her aunt, the youthful Natalie Crandall he had known. Her clear white brow, with the dark hair brushed straight back, the red, mutinous lips, the clear dark eyes, that lift of the head—these were the same. She was perhaps a little taller. Her simple black dress, with its deeply pointed white collar, emphasized her height and her slim and supple grace.

He arose as she came toward him, but she made no movement to extend her hand. She stood before him, erect—not stiffly, but with a certain lovely grace of repose—her dark eyes gazing at him with a direct and, as he thought, a slightly contemptuous questioning.

"You wanted to see me?" she asked.

"I wanted to see your aunt, but I was told it was impossible."

"Yes, my aunt seldom leaves her room."

"Why?" he asked.

It seemed for a moment as if she were undecided whether to answer that question or not. Her brows rose interrogatively, but presently she said: "She fell from her horse some years ago. Since then she has been an invalid."

Again a sense of the fatality of the years rushed over him. Natalie Crandall an invalid—the girl who had raced with him to the beach, who had been ebullient with strength and an easy, pliant vigor, who had in their games often outstripped Leonard Crandall and himself.

"I am sorry," he said at last, and with feeling.

The girl looked at him with a shade more interest.

"You knew my aunt?"

"Yes, we played together as children."

"Oh!" she said, surprised, her lips parted, and she favored him with a more careful scrutiny, her eyes very dark beneath the thick fringe of her lashes. Then she said with a certain elaborate politeness: "I'm sorry you can't see her. I suppose you simply called as an old friend to inquire. What was the name?"

"Kennedy—Andrew Kennedy."

"Somehow I don't remember ever hearing my aunt speak of you."

His hand made an impatient gesture as if sweeping aside all subterfuge.

"She wouldn't speak of me—not as a friend. I was the coachman's son—in your grandmother's day. But we played together as children before we—or at least I—realized class distinctions—myself, Natalie and Leonard."

"Leonard! My father?"

"Yes."

Her eyes were alight with interest.

"You knew my father as a boy! What was he like?"

He tried to tell her in a few phrases of her father's courage, his admirable sportsmanship, his gay abandon. She listened intently and thanked him with that same elaborate politeness. Then she stood quiet, faintly smiling, tremendously aloof. He saw that she thought a casual interview was over, and that she was wondering why he did not go.

Presently she murmured, "I'll tell my aunt you called. It was kind of you."

For some reason her aloofness maddened him.

Again he gave that impatient gesture of his hand, and said brusquely, "I came here for a purpose."

Her eyes widened.

"A purpose?" she repeated.

"Yes!"

"What purpose?"

"I want to buy this place."

She was gazing at him now as if his words were incredible.

"You want to buy—our place?"

He nodded angrily and with determination, "Yes."

"But—why?"

He smiled a little grimly.

"Do I have to state why?"

"But I don't know what to say!"

"First of all, in the purchase of anything, a price must be named."

Her head came up at that.

"I don't know that the Crandall place has any price," she said.

"Everything has a price at which it can be purchased," he reminded her.

She thought over that for a few moments, her eyes unsmiling, her lips pressed into a straight red line.

"Are you sure you're right?" she asked presently, and the way she said it let him see that she had taken some new measure of him as an individual—perhaps as an antagonist.

"I've always found it to be true," he said with deliberation, "and I've had much experience."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Perhaps! But have you had any experience with the Crandall pride?"

"Yes!" he said savagely.

She looked at him curiously for a moment, then dropped her eyes before his steady gaze and said: "My aunt will never consent to the sale of the property. She says that she will die here as she was born here, even though Edgewater itself has changed so much."

"Do you feel that same way?" he asked.

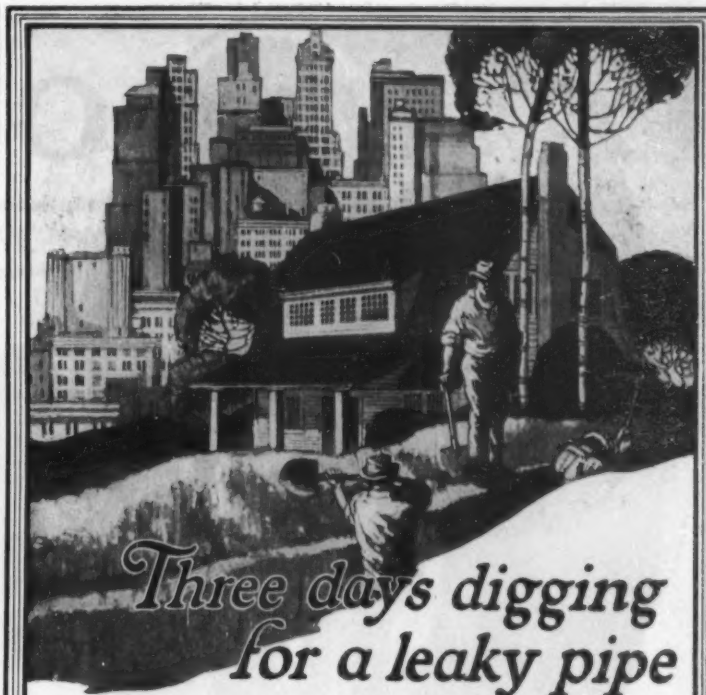
"Oh, as for me"—her eyes swept the dark hall with a peculiar intensity—"I hate it!"

Again they stood silent. Presently he said, "At least you will tell your aunt I called and the purpose of my call?"

"Yes."

"And you'll let me know what she says?"

"Yes. Where can I reach you?"



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"I'm staying for a few days at the Edgewater Inn. You know where it is?"
"Yes."

She moved with him to the doorway, and again in the bright light from without he was amazed at her resemblance to the girl whom he had long ago known—and loved. Moved by an irresistible impulse, he turned to her abruptly.

"If you'll let me come and see you I'll tell you why I want to buy the Crandall place," he said.

She frowned. Her eyes again studied him, appraised him. Then with a quick breath she said: "Come to-morrow at this time. Perhaps by then I'll have word for you from my aunt."

III

EDGEWATER offered few distractions for a man of Andrew Kennedy's type. In fact, no matter what the place or the distractions, it is doubtful if he would have known how to make use of them. It was the first vacation he had had in years. He had decided also to make it a vacation from his perpetual readings, but the enforced idleness simply made him restless and vaguely unhappy.

The next morning he wandered down to the public bathing beach. The way again led past the high stucco wall of the Crandall estate, and he stood for a while at the gate, hoping—although he cursed his folly—that he might catch a glimpse of the girl who had seemed to him so much like that other girl of twenty years ago who was the only one who had ever stirred his emotions. But Sylvia was nowhere to be seen. The white façade of the house, the wide verandas, the long rolling sweep of the lawns were unbroken by a single figure. The enchantment of quietude rested over the place as if it were far removed from the ordinary disturbances of mankind and stood apart brooding in a sunlight of its own.

At the public bathing beach, however, there was more than enough activity. Groups of bright figures on this warm noon of early September lay about on the white sand or dashed in and out of the waves; children with skirts tucked high crouched over bright tin pails that caught the flash of the sun; boys were playing ball. And Kennedy, swinging his cane, drifted about like an unhappy although most mundane ghost come back to haunt the scenes of his youth.

When he returned to the Edgewater Inn he found Mr. Duggan, of the real-estate concern, awaiting him.

"Well, I've been down to the Crandalls', Mr. Kennedy, but they wouldn't let me see Miss Crandall. I did see the niece, but she said she preferred dealing direct with you. I couldn't get anything definite. Now if you'd let me run you over to that house in Cedarhurst near the Hunt Club—"

"No, I'm only interested in the Crandall property."

Mr. Duggan shuffled his feet and looked disconsolate.

"It's a rotten buy, that Crandall property, if you ask me. A place like that in the Edgewater of to-day is as out of keeping as—as a Fifth Avenue palace on the Bowery."

It was after Mr. Duggan had gone that Kennedy did see Sylvia Crandall. She dashed by, brilliant in a crimson sweater and tam-o'-shanter, and at the wheel of a small roadster of familiar make. It was when she was almost past the inn that he saw her return his intent gaze, and to his surprise she waved a hand at him. That sudden informal greeting delighted him beyond all proportion, considering the triviality of the incident.

He found himself counting the minutes that afternoon until the time came when he would be able to see Sylvia Crandall again. He set out early, and walked up and down in front of the great iron gates, waiting for the appointed hour. He did not want to seem too eager. Exactly at four he entered. As he approached the steps that led to the front door Sylvia arose from a low chair on the veranda and came toward him. Her manner, he at once saw, was in general much less formal than on the previous day.

"Hello!" she said, and in a lower voice, with a glance over her shoulder, "Let's walk down toward the beach, where we can't be overheard. You see"—she turned to laugh at him—"I am your ally."

As he followed her he told himself he was a fool to take encouragement from her tone. She was, as she had admitted, as anxious to have the place sold as he was

to buy it. They crossed the graveled driveway and strolled over the green hill sloping to the sea. Long purple shadows from the trees lay over the grass, and the atmosphere of the September day was golden, as if the air were thick with dust of gold. It was the sort of day that brushes the heart with memories. At some distance from the house they found a rustic bench screened by the glossy dark leaves of rhododendrons. The girl sat there and motioned to him to sit beside her.

"I've talked with my aunt," she said. "She does, of course, remember you."

"What did she say?"

"About you?"

He shook his head impatiently.

"No, about selling the property."

"She was noncommittal. She doesn't want to sell."

"Well, about me then?"

She glanced away from him as she answered, "Perhaps it were kinder not to tell you what she said."

"She still despises me?"

"No, it isn't that," she said quickly.

"But your success—you are a great success, aren't you?—emphasizes to her the Crandall failure. I mean my family's failure—the decline of our own good fortune. You see, you are in a way a symbol of the change that has come over us—come over the very place in which we live. My aunt is proud, as you know—and bitter. She is unreconciled to any change. She still tries to live in the past. She hates and fears these thousands of new people who have descended upon Edgewater. She takes all the alterations they have brought as a personal affront to herself. Who was the king who commanded the tide not to rise—that's like my aunt. For instance, her room—I don't know whether you remember this—was always in the left wing of the house overlooking the marshland where now that odious colony of bungalows is."

"Odious!" he repeated thoughtfully. "Yes, I suppose it is odious, but it enables so many to enjoy the sea and the cool sea air."

"I call it odious only because it is so ugly," she explained. "Yes, in a way, I suppose it is a good thing that the many can enjoy the sea rather than that a few should have an unobstructed view. But my aunt does not feel that way. She moved to the right wing of the house so that she might never see what to her is a desecration of the Edgewater of her youth, as if by never seeing it she could eradicate it. Yet she won't leave Edgewater. She has shut herself up here within the stucco wall as if it would protect her from a world given over to constant change. Now you come wanting to take away what seems to her her last refuge, and you—you yourself, as I have said, are a symbol of a new and, to her, disgraceful order of things."

"She is still the same Natalie Crandall."

"Oh, yes," she said simply. "Everything changes—except Aunt Nat."

She sat for a time watching the flight of a gull in the clear blue sky, and then turned to him to say, "But we should sell!"

"Why?"

"It's so futile for us to try to keep going here. We can just about manage it by economizing in all sorts of petty little ways. For years we've struggled to keep up appearances, and that's a thing, it seems, that breeds its own peculiar poison." She made a gesture with her hands. "What's the use of it?"

She sat silent for a minute, her eyes reflective, her shoulders drooping slightly, and then, straightening, said briskly, "I wish, like you, I could get away from Edgewater to make my own fortune somewhere."

"I'm a man. It's harder for a woman."

"Yes, but I'm hard enough so far as that goes." Her eyes as they met his were just a little challenging and derisive. "Besides, a prisoner doesn't care how high the price of freedom is."

"Tell your aunt that I'll pay all the property's worth."

"All right, I'll tell her. You're strangely anxious to buy the place, aren't you?" Again she searched him with a puzzled frown.

"Yes," he answered briefly.

"You promised to tell me why."

"Yes."

But he found it difficult to tell. His vow seemed ridiculous now—a trivial, sentimental matter worn thin with years to lay before this girl's cool appraisal. But at last he told her, curtly and without

(Continued on Page 81)

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(Continued from Page 78)

apology. And he watched her closely to note the effect of the telling upon her. But her attitude baffled him. She heard him through with that trick of graceful repose she had, sitting there, her hands folded in her lap, her eyes hidden, a faint and elusive smile upon her lips.

But when he had finished she turned to him and said, "Then it's revenge you want?"

The word both annoyed and surprised him.

"Revenge!" he echoed.

"Of course! Revenge for that slight placed upon you in your youth."

"You make it sound melodramatic," he protested.

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Isn't it a bit melodramatic?" she asked lightly, and arose. "Shall we go back?"

He followed her up the hill, and while they walked she turned to him to say, "I'll have a go at Aunt Nat again and let you know the result. How much longer do you intend remaining in Edgewater?"

"I hope to leave to-morrow morning. I had planned to stay several days—it's my first vacation in years—but I'm restless. I want to get back to work."

"Your work is everything to you?"

"It's all I have."

"I don't understand."

"I mean it's my only interest."

"It's your drug, I imagine."

It was now he who did not understand her.

"My drug?"

"Oh, everybody has a drug of some sort in order to forget the emptiness of life—that is, everybody who is unhappy."

"Have you a drug?" he asked.

She hesitated.

"Yes," she admitted finally.

A moment of awkwardness fell upon them, a moment of quickened suspense.

Then after the pause Sylvia Crandall said: "I'm sorry you must leave so soon. I'm afraid I can't force my aunt into a quick decision. She must have time. Can't I persuade you to stay in Edgewater a few days longer? You said you had planned to stay a few days."

"Yes, that is really why I came down just now. I had the time and I felt I had earned the vacation. But—I'm restless."

"Perhaps you are restless because you lack companionship. I can offer you that."

He regarded her with astonishment, shocked into an open betrayal of it.

"You! What do you mean?"

"There are any number of things we can do to pass the time. We can swim together. I'll drive you around the country in my flivver. We can wander down the beach and talk. You will be glad to talk of your own achievements. Men, I understand, always are. And I—I am wild to hear something else than the little round of chatter one gets here."

"You are kind," he said, still scrutinizing her, still questioning, as if instinctively he knew he must be on his guard.

But she disarmed him with: "No, I'm not kind; I'm mercenary. I've admitted to you I want the Crandall place sold—sold soon. It's depreciating in value every day." She gave him a challenging glance. "Besides, there are not many buyers with a romantic interest in it. Will you stay?"

"Do you really want me to stay?"

"Yes, for the reasons stated."

He looked into her eyes, which were gazing a little mockingly into his own.

"Yes, I'll stay," he said soberly.

IV

HE REGRETTED the answer almost as soon as he had given it. It was idiotic to let himself become too much interested in Sylvia Crandall; and the girl, ever since he had first seen her, had threatened to take possession of his senses. Even his long-treasured ambition to own the Crandall place had somehow faded and become of entirely secondary importance. He told himself he had been caught by the resemblance to her aunt—the girl her aunt had been. That resemblance had in a flash brought back his youth, or rather the emotions of his youth, which for years in his concentration on his purpose he had held suppressed within him. And now these emotions had him within their grasp. He, too, was like the king who had commanded the tide not to rise—the resistless tide of his own emotions.

But viewed calmly, if it were still possible for him to view the matter calmly,

what possible hope was there for him with Sylvia Crandall? If his adolescent love for her aunt so long ago had been folly, this new infatuation was folly tinged with utter madness. He was headed for a humiliation keener and more profound than that he had known as a lad. Sylvia was so young! He had discovered that she had been born a year before he had left Edgewater. Her birth had not been generally announced at the time, because Leonard's unfortunate marriage had been kept more or less of a secret. That made Sylvia twenty-one—and he was forty. To her he must seem an old man.

Yet she had been kind to him, and he could give her everything. She had spoken of privations. He could overwhelm her with luxuries beyond her most ardent desires—that is, if she wanted extravagances. Somehow she did not seem the sort of girl who did. Then he shrugged his shoulders angrily as he found himself swinging full again on a tide of hoping against hope.

In the days that followed—days glamorous with an unusually golden week of September weather—he continued to swing alternately between hope and an abysmal sense of his own folly. He and Sylvia spent much time together. Every morning they bathed together in the lazy ocean, and fortunately he found that his early training as a swimmer enabled him to keep up with the girl. In this at least his years in no way betrayed him.

Once she brought a basket of lunch to the beach, and beneath the shade of a huge orange-colored umbrella they spread the chicken salad and sandwiches and bottles of ginger ale.

As they sat opposite each other on the dazzling white sand she said, "Now isn't this worth a stay in Edgewater?"

He mumbled happily, and indeed the occasion was like a dream of vivid and exquisite happiness to him—the scene, this girl, the glow of well-being that followed the sharp sting of the water. It was like nothing he had ever known. Yet his common sense told him it was a dream from which there must soon be an awakening.

"You're getting as brown as an autumn leaf," she continued, her glance approving him. "Already you seem ten years younger than when I first saw you."

"Make it twenty and you'll have me back in the Edgewater of my youth," he said.

She leaned forward to reach a sandwich, and he felt the smooth satin of her bare arm against his. He had to fight an impulse to seize her arm and press it to his lips.

"Suppose I asked you to marry me, as I once asked your aunt, what would you answer?" he asked lightly, not daring to trust his voice to say it other than lightly.

"I don't know," she said, and smiled at him. "I wouldn't do as my aunt did and order you to the stables. You no longer belong in the stables."

"But what would you do?" he insisted. "Are you thinking of trying it?" she bantered him.

"Perhaps."

"Well, let's see—I think I'd stare at you loftily for a moment or two, and then ask you to pass me the chicken salad—and, by the way, please pass it, will you? You see, in that way I'd make your attitude absurd. My generation no longer goes in for heroics as my aunt's did."

So they spent their days together, and Andrew marveled each day at Sylvia Crandall's changing moods. Sometimes she was like a mischievous child, and raced along the beach mocking him as he plodded after her. Sometimes, as they walked, she thrust her arm through his and gazed up into his face with the utmost seriousness while he talked of his business and of his success and of how success alone had somehow failed to satisfy him. And sometimes with bent head she regarded him derisively from beneath the fringe of her heavy lashes. And there were yet other times when she was entirely enigmatic, aloof, and seemed older than he was himself.

"Do I seem very old to you?" he once asked her.

"No," she said, and smiled faintly. "As a matter of fact, in every way except one I'm years older than you."

Kennedy was happy—a happiness tinged constantly with sadness, for he knew this companionship must soon end; and he foresaw the immediate end one afternoon when Sylvia said to him: "I have a message for you from Aunt Natalie. She herself will give you her answer to-night. She wants you to come to dinner."

"You mean your aunt will leave her room to see me?" he asked in astonishment.

"Yes." She looked at him gravely, and in her eyes he seemed to detect what might have been fear. "I don't understand it myself. There are to be others at the dinner—just a few friends, however, who are motoring over from Hewlett."

SHE had mentioned that dinner was at eight, and so at eight his car left him before the Crandall door. The withered servant ushered him into a living room at the right of the hall—a long room overcrowded with furniture and obviously unchanged since a period of more lavish decoration than the present. There was a surplus of odd chairs heavily upholstered and tables of teakwood and mahogany; there were also little stands of teakwood scattered over the floor at awkward points. Over the mantel hung a portrait of Sylvia's grandfather, and in his eyes, Kennedy fancied, there was a scornful resentment of the changes in the world since he had known it—changes that had brought with them Andrew Kennedy as a guest in this house.

As Andrew entered the room his eyes searched for Natalie Crandall, but it was Sylvia who left a small group of people and came forward with outstretched hand, saying, "My aunt will not come down until just before dinner is served. It is, of course, a great effort for her to come down at all."

Following Sylvia, he was introduced to a Mrs. Blackburn, a Miss Ethridge, to Mr. Blackburn and a young man with close-clipped hair and a waxed mustache, whose name he did not catch.

The circle closed after the introduction and left Kennedy standing apart. He watched with brooding eyes the volatile animation of the others. There was no use in telling himself that he could buy out these people a dozen times over. He saw that they had something he lacked, a grace of manner that was denied him. Worthless perhaps, but for the moment he wished ardently he had it. Its lack made him feel clumsy, ill at ease.

Sylvia wore a dark dress that revealed her white neck and shoulders and her bare arms, browned in contrast from exposure to the sun; but the other women's dresses, pink and lavender, were like tinted thistle-down blown into this somber room. The men wore dinner jackets. Kennedy himself, unprepared for evening festivities of any sort in Edgewater, had on a gray sack-suit of rough weave that emphasized his separation from these others with their correct attire, their easy familiarity and cool, clipped voices.

But Sylvia did not let him remain standing apart. After shaking violently a silver container, she poured its contents into thin glasses edged with gold and offered him one with "It isn't a real cocktail, Mr. Kennedy—just sherry and bitters"—she glanced at the portrait over the mantel—some of my grandfather's sherry. Unfortunately he didn't belong to a generation that left gin to its parched descendants."

As she stood there smiling Kennedy saw her smile die suddenly, saw her gaze transfixed as with wide eyes she regarded the doorway.

He turned.

In the doorway, leaning on the arm of one of the ancient servants, was Natalie Crandall; and Andrew Kennedy was not sure whether admiration or pity dominated him. Here before him, more clearly than he had ever seen it before, was personified the struggle between the weakness of the body and the strength of the spirit. Time had indeed changed that young and lovely creature whom he had known; but her head was held as high and as proudly as ever, and there was still beauty in her face despite the lines of suffering which marred it. In the white mask of her face her eyes seemed enormous, great blots of liquid darkness. She wore a cream-colored satin gown curiously suggestive of both the fashion and the aristocracy of another day.

Kennedy at once went forward, and Natalie Crandall greeted him graciously enough, leaning more heavily on the servant so that she might offer him her hand.

"It's been a long time since we've met, Andrew," she said.

"Yes," he agreed, and there was so much that might have been said between them, and yet so little that could be said, that he stopped with that simple yes.

Then Sylvia and the others came forward, and there was a polite murmur of

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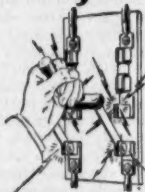
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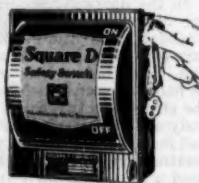


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greetings and respects followed by a general movement toward the dining room across the hall. And in very pity now Andrew Kennedy kept his eyes averted from the figure in white satin led in, hobbling, between the servant and Sylvia Crandall's splendid young strength.

When they were seated, Kennedy placed at Natalie's right and at Sylvia's left, the withered servant and another began hovering round the table. The food was simple, although served from heavy silver dishes and porcelain as fine as the leaf of a white rose. There was also a thin white wine for the rock-crystal glasses.

At first there was a little tension. The other guests gazed at Sylvia, Natalie and Andrew Kennedy as if the very juxtaposition of these three held some strange and hidden meaning. But Sylvia, Andrew saw, conquered a nervousness that at first agitated her, and leaning forward plunged into a tangle of trivialities. With relief the others—except Natalie, who sat aloof—followed her lead. To Kennedy the chatter seemed to run in a frothy current filled with allusions to people he had never known and places he had never seen—Paris and Bermuda, Palm Beach and White Sulphur Springs. Again he felt immeasurably apart from them. Into the midst of this chatter Natalie abruptly thrust the command of her cool, clear voice.

Seizing her glass, she raised it and cried, "Let us all drink to Change!"

At once silence fell upon the company. Sylvia's expression was one of alarm. The others sat drooping and intent as if there had come at last the touch of drama which all evening had seemed to hang imminent in the atmosphere. Mrs. Blackburn leaned forward with a certain avid eagerness.

"Change!" she echoed, her glance darting from Natalie Crandall to Sylvia, from Sylvia to Andrew Kennedy.

"Perhaps I should say to America," Natalie Crandall elaborated, still in that clear, penetrating voice. "America, the seasaw, where nothing stays as it is; where one person's fortunes rise as another's decline."

They drank the toast, but without enthusiasm.

"I drank your toast, Natalie," Mrs. Blackburn said with a laugh that was a little hysterical, "but I confess I haven't the slightest idea what you're getting at."

Natalie Crandall gazed slowly and in turn at each of her guests.

"Then I'll tell you," she said. "I was referring to Mr. Kennedy. Once he was our coachman's son —"

Sylvia started forward. "Aunt Nat! You forget that Mr. Kennedy is our guest!"

"No, I don't forget," said Natalie Crandall. "I am simply offering an explanation to the others, who may find his presence in this house a little peculiar. As I said, once he was our coachman's son. Now he's worth —"

she turned to him with deliberate insolence—"just how many millions are you worth, Andrew? And he has come back to buy this place and throw us, the Crandalls, out. Isn't that a very perfect example of the changes America brings about?" She turned to Kennedy again.

"And you are victorious, for you are offering us more than it is wise to refuse. If you will send me the name of your lawyer I shall have our lawyer deal with him. That will be pleasanter, I am sure, than if we deal direct."

She stopped as if the force which had animated her had been abruptly exhausted. She called the servant to her.

"Estelle, help me to my room," she said in a voice that was no longer clear.

She arose trembling, huddled; but before she left she bowed to each of her guests, last of all to Andrew Kennedy. Upon him she let her eyes rest for a moment with an expression of ironic and bitter triumph. Then as they all stood, Natalie Crandall hobbled out of the room between the supporting forms of the servants.

It was an appalled silence that fell upon the dinner party that she had left. Even Sylvia, Andrew noticed, could not rally to the restoration of the trivial chatter. She sat drooping in her chair, her face singularly white. Mrs. Blackburn essayed a nervous whisper or two. As for Kennedy, he sat there sick with disgust. He was not sure, however, whether the disgust was more with himself or Natalie Crandall. He had been betrayed again into a position where he must suffer the humiliation of her scorn. The scene of twenty years ago had in a way repeated itself. Yet despite his anger he still felt pity for that broken, scornful woman who had once been a lovely and arrogant girl. Perhaps she was justified in humiliating him. It was true that he had come here to wrest away from her what Sylvia had called her last refuge, and she had used against him the only weapon that was left her. She had said he was victorious. Victorious? What mockery there was in the word! For he knew now that his desire to own the Crandall place was gone—utterly gone! As for Sylvia—no, he couldn't quite let himself think of Sylvia.

He felt now that whatever his dreams may have been about her they must be definitely ended. There had always been a chasm between them. To-night it had deepened irrevocably.

The dinner in some way managed to drag itself to its dreary conclusion. In the semidarkness of the hallway, while the others passed into the living room, Andrew Kennedy stepped in front of Sylvia.

"I'll go now," he said. She stood before him, still very white, still with that look of fear in her eyes.

"Can you ever forgive me?" she asked, and laid her hand imploringly upon his arm.

"There is nothing for which I have to forgive you," he said.

"You would not have come to-night—if it had not been for me."

"You know that?"

"Yes."

"Still, what happened to-night was in no way your fault. It is myself I cannot forgive. I know now what a fool I've been. To think of wasting so many years on such a futile ambition! It has taken to-night, however, to make me realize fully how futile it was."

She drew nearer to him. "Do you mean you no longer want the Crandall place?"

"I mean more than that. I mean that I never want to see Edgewater again."

"You mean—you will never return to Edgewater after to-night?"

"Never!"

She dropped her head. Then she raised it again, and again gazed directly and profoundly into his eyes. The touch of her hand on his arm tightened.

"Then—take me with you," she said.

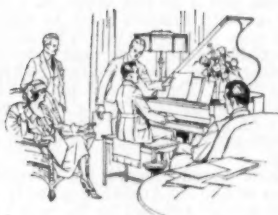


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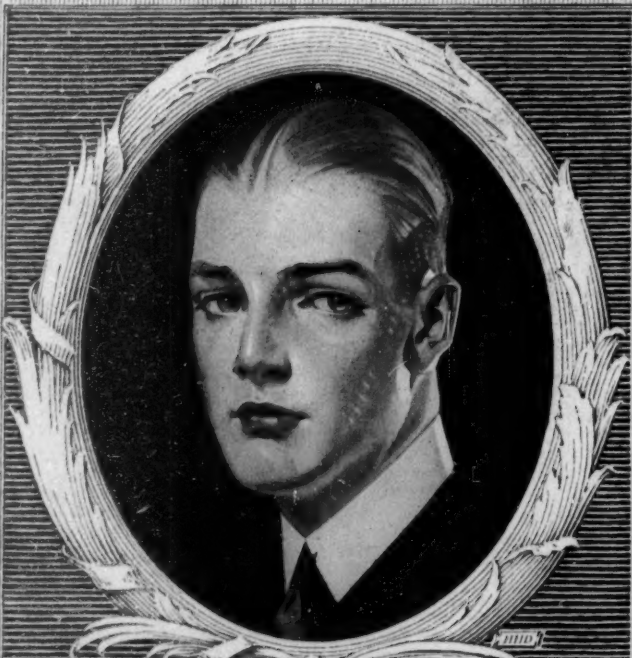
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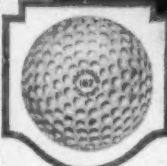


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THE ARCHDUKE'S TAPESTRY

(Continued from Page 9)

"I am debarred by my name—which is proscribed—from any political service. I ride like a jockey, and I have no horses. I am a soldier, and my sword is over there hanging on the wall. My languages I occasionally and very privately teach. I can feed my mother and myself, not very adequately, on what I earn. It is true I might earn more by driving a taxi, but I have always to be careful that my mother's heart does not break at the means by which I keep her alive. A friend of mine the other day was unfortunate enough to lose his wife and child through veronal, because his wife could not bear his method of earning their bread. You see, we are now the proletariat, but we do not know how to be. It will hurt my mother very much to sell the tapestry, but she prefers that particular pain. That choice is still left to us."

"But if you do not succeed in selling the tapestry?" Miss Draper asked quietly.

"What will you do then, Baron Bidart?" "In that case I have another alternative," said Franz Anton; "a possible, but also not an agreeable alternative. Are you interested in pictures? We have a Cranach here; it is already sold, but not yet taken away."

"Thank you," said Miss Draper submissively; "I adore Cranachs."

She wanted to say that though she adored Cranachs she had an even livelier interest in Franz Anton's alternative, but something about this young man intimidated her as no young man had ever intimidated her before. She had to accept the Cranach instead of the alternative.

III

FALLING in love to order is a difficult process, even if the order comes from your own will. It requires a concentration of mind and a singleness of purpose which are seldom secured by falling in love with somebody else.

Franz Anton had always had a willful heart. It had been found necessary by a very august relative of his to suggest to him on more than one occasion a prolonged visit to Innsbruck. The august relative—himself no mean judge of these matters—had declared that absence, reinforced by fresh charms, is the only prophylactic to be depended upon.

Franz Anton would not have confessed that he was in love with a little American girl who went about all day distributing flannel and condensed milk to reduced Viennese babies. But he was preoccupied with the difference between this graceful creature, who could be cheerful without silliness and companionable without excitement, whose simple clothes were subsidiary to her personal charm, and the robust assertiveness of Anna Schneider, who could not keep quiet and whose clothes seemed to suffer from the same disability.

He should have reminded himself of the difference, equally great, between their fortunes, and run his duty blind, as he was said in old days to have run his horses. He paid for his procrastination as the dark winter days crawled by, by finding himself near that uneasy spot—the end of his tether.

Mr. and Mrs. Bolby Butler did nothing more about the tapestry. They were extremely friendly to Franz Anton and provided him with temptations—into which he always fell—of meeting Miss Draper. They asked the archduchess to tea at a well-known restaurant, and were disappointed that she seemed unable to arrange a suitable date for the occasion.

It was Herr Schneider who brought the situation to an end. He had no intention of allowing his daughter to make a fool of herself, unless that fool was to become the wife of Baron Bidart. He ordered her to invite Franz Anton to meet them at a *thé d'ansant* to be given at one of the chief hotels, and he told Anna that unless the occasion witnessed her engagement to Baron Bidart, his charm, his single eyeglass and his dangerous and intermittent love-making must all come to an end together.

"Either you get him, my girl, or he gets out," said the butter king in his unbending democratic way.

Anna wept large, light tears at this order, for she was without any undue faith in her simple charms, and the better to achieve her tender purpose she bought a flame-colored hat several yards wide, and a dress without arms or shoulders.

The hotel was full, hot and gay. Half of Vienna was starving; a quarter more watched the savings of years slip through the sieve of their immediate needs; the fourth part found themselves wildly and extravagantly rich, with no yesterdays and no to-morrows, in the midst of an immense and swaggering to-day.

Franz Anton obeyed his summons. He, too, knew that the occasion was final; he danced six times with Anna Schneider and wondered, as he guided her broad bare back and topheavy headdress in and out of the crowd of dancers, at which moment and in what manner he should make her his own.

Anna had been taught to dance very carefully, but Nature had never shown her how to move. She clung heavily to the lithe form of her partner, kicking out slowly at intervals in the direction of the other dancers. She was rather like a toy run by machinery, whose works are not strong enough for its size. The fox trot is a dangerous dance; you must be very elegant to appear elegant while dancing it, and if you are at all vulgar you appear infinitely vulgar.

"If I have to marry her," Franz Anton said to himself firmly, "at least I shall never dance with her again."

"Fräulein Anna," he said aloud; and then she stepped on his toe. She was nervous, and the sudden intention in his voice distracted her. Franz Anton was more annoyed than hurt. He could not check his annoyance at once, and he felt that it would be a decided breach of taste to propose in an annoyed voice.

He raised his eyes across the expanse of flame-colored hat and met those of Mr. and Mrs. Bolby Butler watching him. He let Anna go with a perfunctory excuse, cutting across her effusive apologies. No man can be held by apologies unless they are his own.

Franz Anton escaped and found, as he had half hoped and half feared, that Miss Cicely Draper was with her English friends. "It is my afternoon off," she explained to him, smiling. "Don't you see my glass slippers? They won't be safe after seven o'clock."

"Ah," said Franz Anton, smiling gravely, "for me it is otherwise. It is my afternoon on. I am not safe now, and I shall be no safer after seven o'clock."

Franz Anton was the best dancer in Vienna, and if he had shown at a disadvantage with Fräulein Anna he made up for it now. The girl he held in his arms was as flexible as a reed. The music swept them together in an organic unity. Neither of them tired. They danced again and yet again. The cessation of the music was a shock to their senses; it was as if a natural element was suddenly withdrawn from them.

Franz Anton grasped the interval allowed to him by Anglo-Saxon laxity, and found a table screened by the crowd from all their acquaintances. They were as free as if they had been cast on a desert island, but with the extravagance of youth they chose the occasion for a quarrel.

Franz Anton had about two hundred kronen in the world. It would just pay for their refreshments, and he intended that it should. To-night he was burning his boats and he wished to have them flare up behind him with a roar.

Cicely asserted that she never allowed herself to be paid for, even in her own country by her oldest friends, and she could not begin now. Franz Anton remarked freezingly that he feared he must ask her to conform to the customs of his country, whatever she did in her own. Cicely, flushing hotly, told him that she was a non-conformist by nature, and came from a country where women settled their own social usages.

Franz Anton took the bill in his hand. Something in his eyes, somber and tragic, checked both Cicely's anger and her determination. Perhaps she guessed that this was his last two hundred kronen, and knew that to rob a poor man of his opportunity for giving is no great generosity.

At any rate she murmured, "How tiresome men are! I suppose if you must you must."

"I suppose since I must I may," laughed Franz Anton, and glanced up to see another account which he was less willing to meet.

Anna Schneider had succeeded in finding him, and she was desperate, for she knew

her time was short. She leaned across the table, her hat blotting out completely the slight form of her rival. She seemed to fill the whole horizon, and to be as solidly threatening as an avalanche.

"This is our dance, I think," she asserted with quivering intensity.

Franz Anton paid the bill before answering, and pushed his last twenty kronen into the waiter's hand.

He ought to have been sorry for Anna Schneider; her breast heaved and fell tumultuously, tears of anger and shame stood in her round blue eyes; but it is an unfortunate masculine peculiarity that even tender-hearted men are seldom sorry for young women unless they are in love with them, and never if the young women display a preference which, however touching, happens to be inconvenient.

"I think you are mistaken," said Franz Anton steadily, meeting Anna's eyes with a look that seemed to remove her forcibly from the table. "That pleasure is still to come."

She laughed a foolish, timid, unhappy laugh, and turned her broad back upon them.

Cicely said in a quick undertone: "Take her away and dance with her. You are being cruel."

But Franz Anton looked down at the floor and said nothing. It seemed an eternity before he raised his eyes. In it he had watched a fortune slip out of his grasp, and remembered with what empty hands he would have to return to the archduchess.

Love is not the strongest of human passions. Hunger is stronger, and self-preservation is at least as strong.

For the moment Franz Anton forgot Cicely. Even when he looked up he did not immediately notice her presence. He only noticed that Anna Schneider had gone. She was making her way to the distant door, a pathetic, conspicuous figure, upon her father's arm.

She wouldn't have gone to the door if her father had not been there. She would have hovered solidly and lingeringly within reach of Franz Anton's second thoughts, and it is possible they would have found her.

"I asked you to go to her," said Cicely accusingly.

Then Franz Anton remembered her and smiled.

"I noticed that she had your sympathy," he said; "I don't know why. She was my alternative, and I have let her go. If you have any sympathy I think that you owe it to me."

"What are you going to do now?" she asked breathlessly.

Franz Anton fixed his monocle firmly in his eye and looked down at Cicely Draper.

"After all, it is you who are responsible for the loss of my alternative," he said; "passively perhaps, sympathetically perhaps, but still responsible. I think that in some way or other you should be prepared to pay for it. What should you say if I made love to you instead?"

"But you can still see her again?" said Cicely quickly.

Franz Anton shook his head.

"I shall never have that pleasure," he said warmly.

"But now that you have sold the tapestry," Cicely went on, "I thought you would not need any alternative. Don't you know they've taken the tapestry? Oh, but they've written! They offered you your price."

Franz Anton closed his eyes for a moment. The hot room, full of movement and color, seemed to be turning over in his brain.

"Ah, if they've taken the tapestry," he murmured, "the question is not so urgent. You have been very kind, gracious *Fraulein*, in permitting me to think that you were interested in my rather doubtful future, so that I will confess that five minutes ago I was desperate. Now I am only a little excited with having no more need for desperation. I find it a singular feeling. You must forgive me if, having learned to be blind, I am a little startled at the sight of the sun."

The tears that were in Cicely Draper's eyes threatened to fall.

"You have the most dangerous of human qualities," Franz Anton said to her gently, "a kind heart. I will try to take no more advantage of it than the little famished babies you came here to help. I think it will be perfectly safe for you to dance with me again."

Cicely shook her head.

"I must be back at seven," she said.

"Then I shall at least have the pleasure of escorting you home," Franz Anton asserted.

He made way for her through the tight-packed mass of pleasure seekers. They no longer looked rapacious and terrible. The Bolby Butlers accepted his gratitude with the formless confusion of English people caught in an act of generosity. They made no protest at his carrying off Cicely. They lived in a world where forms and protests were alike unnecessary.

Franz Anton said nothing to Cicely until they reached the Stephans-Platz. He was coming to a great decision—it was not a painful one, but for a man of Franz Anton's character and habits it was surprising. He decided to marry the little American girl and work for his living. He had belonged to the old rich, and he could have belonged to the new. As he walked beside his slim young companion it occurred to him that their pursuits had been, after all, very much alike. Food, music and dancing had consumed most of their hours. There might, after all, be something different and more exciting in another range of interests, shared with a different type of human being.

The last light of the day still clung in a rosy glow to the august and splendid spire of St. Stephan; above the dark ridge of the roof a crowd of stars leaned down.

"Cicely," said the young man; "Cicely, I have been thinking—the tapestry will not do instead. It was a wife you took from me. Are you not going to give me back a wife?"

"Ah," she said breathlessly, "you said you wouldn't be in a hurry; and you are in a hurry!"

He drew her into the dark archway under the clustered saints.

"I shall be a very poor man," he said gently; "I propose to settle half of the sum I receive for the tapestry upon my mother. The other half will do very well to help me to enter the factory of a friend who would have taken me before if I had had a small capital. You shall not think of me only as a young man who sells heirlooms and dances."

"I don't think of you like that," she said.

"I do understand more than you think. And I must tell you the truth about the tapestry. You laughed the other day because we didn't know your mother's names. Do you remember? But you don't know mine! My father is one of the richest men in the United States. I bought the tapestry. It was why I came to you that day, only I made the Bolby Butlers do it for me. I didn't think you and your mother would like just a young girl by herself, buying your wonderful old treasure, and then when I got to know you I hoped that perhaps you wouldn't have to sell it—so I waited." She stopped and trembled. Franz Anton said nothing. He no longer held her arm. "You won't have to sell it—if you don't want to," she said under her breath.

They moved on slowly into the high-built narrow street where the mission lodged.

Still Franz Anton was silent. He was turning over in his hot proud mind the rawness of this new fact. It was far more difficult for him to marry an heiress he loved than one whom he had loathed. A king can stoop better than he can climb; and Franz Anton had in him the blood of kings.

At last he said: "I couldn't do it, you know, no matter how much I wanted it, if you hadn't let me pay for the tea."

The archduchess received Franz Anton's communication with none of the joy the young man had expected from her.

"This is an American," she said coldly.

"It is true that their democracy is older and less blatant than ours, but it is probably the more deep-seated. I should have understood *Fraulein Anna*; in time I think I could have erased her democracy. One learns one's place better when one has only been out of it a short time. This one will go her own way. She will be very modern and outrageous, but she will not be unsure; and in time she may persuade you to be outrageous also. I cannot see any great source of rejoicing for you, my poor boy, in this change of object. It is true that we shall not starve, but from that *Fraulein Anna* would also have saved us. I have overlooked, however, one cause of congratulation. We must sustain as well as we can our proximity to a barbarian—but *Gott sei Dank*, the tapestry will not fall into the hands of the English!"



Facade of Bancroft Hall
U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.



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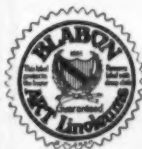
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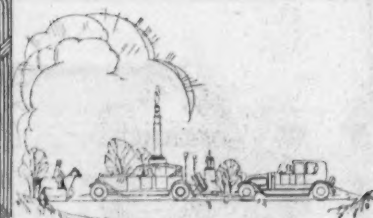
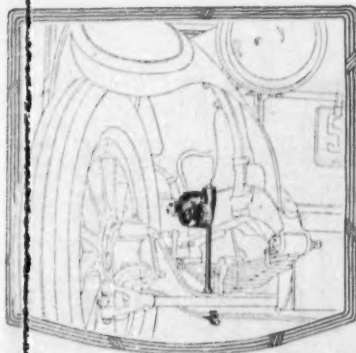


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GOING BACK HOME

(Continued from Page 7)

future also, and put up our educated children as security to the future?"

Didn't the old man say something about making good American citizens, educated men and women, who would be useful to the country? He did! This was America, then. Anyhow they voted the bonds, and they built the cream-colored, pressed-brick schoolhouse which for thirty years was the pride of Prairie City. Guess you ought to know where it was, oughtn't you? It must have been right about here, near the big steps of the high school. Ha-hum! And you remember the first graduating class—of three pupils. The great cream-colored, pressed-brick Prairie City high school had fitted out the first three of the children of the rural town to enter the state university—wasn't that the truth? And now that building is gone!

Wonder where your old diploma is—with the blue ribbon around it! Can't just think of the subject of your graduation address here. In the audience at the exercises were a good many gray-haired men, some with whiskers under their chins, early settlers who came out here when it was all wild prairie. Your father was there, saw you graduate at the high school, just as he did at the university six years later. It was a fight for him to put you through, for his health and business began to fail about then, as he grew older; but he told you that though it was hard to get the money for that last year he was resolved to see you through the university, because he believed in education, knew it would help a man succeed. So then he died. And you—well, you are to lecture here to-day on success, are you not? You've succeeded, haven't you, Mr. Hawkshaw? . . . Yes, the old cream-colored, pressed-brick high school must have been right over there.

Well, by now the committee of the Rotary Club will be looking for you. You leave the new courthouse and the flag, which make you feel yet more that somebody has put something over on you. The committee want to take you out a little while around the town, not to bore you, they say, but just to show you the place.

"We'll have a luncheon at the City Club—not many, probably not over three hundred, because it's in business hours. When you lecture at the new high school there'll probably be twelve hundred."

Everybody knows you, everybody knew your father and mother. A good many people now tell you what good folks your parents were, how much respected, how hard working. Came out here when this was all wild prairie country.

The Mirage of the Prairie

You haven't seen the new factories yet, have you? Didn't know that Prairie City made more baby carriages and electric washing machines every day than any other town in the United States? Didn't know we manufactured motor trucks and lawn mowers now, did you? Pay roll is pretty heavy here. Four banks now on the public square, with white-marble pillars.

They show you ten blocks of brick factory buildings with prism windows. They show you where the old depot used to be—nothing left of it now but a few freight sheds. They show you a half mile of bungalows built by the realty company for the working people, and those houses stand where the hazel brush used to be. They show you in other parts of the town bungalows up to forty-five thousand dollars, colonial residences up to eighty thousand dollars. These structures rise like the phantasms of some mirage of the desert. Well, this was all a desert once, wasn't it? All wild prairie country here when your father came West. Different now? Rather! "Just time for a run out to the country club before luncheon," says G. Harry Byllesby.

So you are whirled to a large Elizabethan building, which would not have been possible in your day in these parts. The rolling green landscape of the golf links seems familiar, though golf was unknown when you were young. You observe this golf club to be located directly upon what was once your favorite rabbit-shooting ground. They take you to the prize view of the club, down the creek valley, and you tell them that in the old times you could have killed twenty rabbits any day with tracking snow along in here when you were a boy.

They point out a tract which the realty company is developing—with building restrictions; nothing less than twenty-thousand-dollar bungalows—and you recognize it as the very place where you used to walk out any summer evening with your father and the old setter, Sport, and kill a half dozen or a dozen prairie chickens, according to how many the Congregationalist preacher wanted on that particular day. He had a good many children, and they used to grumble at having to eat so many prairie chickens that the deacons brought in all the time. And now as you, Harold D. Hawkshaw, stand on the shorn greens of the country club there comes to mind a picture of the old grassland here, and the old dog on point, and the deadly accuracy with the muzzle-loading shotgun of the red-whiskered deacon, your father, who came out here when Elizabethan buildings were unknown. And you recall that when the old man had got his quota of birds he would take the setter by the collar and pull him away from his point and say to you, "Well, son, I reckon we've got enough for to-day."

After a time the president and committee of the Rotary Club shoo the orator of the day into the longest and shiniest car of the fleet, and you are whirled away to the new high-school building, which previously you had discovered for yourself. So you find yourself on the platform all ready to lecture about success in life.

Your Best None Too Good

There is some sophisticated music. The big auditorium—larger than anything in the state university when you were a student there—fills up with a sophisticated audience. You are introduced by a sophisticated principal of the high school, who leads you to the proscenium arch and facetiously alludes to the fact that half a century or so ago you stood as a boy in the old cream-colored, pressed-brick schoolhouse, clutching to your bosom the first diploma ever issued in Prairie City. The master of ceremonies tells this sophisticated audience that you have come to tell them about success in life. He is glad that so many have come out to hear the speaker of the day.

Why have they come out? The mayor of the town, the president of the Rotary Club, the principal of the high school, all tell them why. Because you were a boy here! Because you were raised here in this town! Because your father and your mother, pioneers, were known and loved here in this town! They came out here in 1850, when this was all wild prairie. Because—But where is the glory of your own proud personal achievements in all this? What dramatic entry have you made upon your old town? These people, even the younger generation, welcome you not for the sake of what money you have made, but for the sake of your father and mother, who came out here when this was all wild prairie. You thought they wanted to hear you, Harold D. Hawkshaw. They did not! They wanted Hal Hawkshaw, son of Prairie City.

All of which queers your prearranged speech—makes you feel sort of funny anyhow. You had planned to hand it to them with dignity, standing very erect; coat, informal business cutaway, single button; hands in pockets—as much the attitude of a bank president as possible. But somehow as the discreet applause of welcome dies you feel that you have been betrayed—betrayed by yourself. It is not going to be the coat at all, but what is inside the coat and above it. You are against an American audience used to the very best. You can't condescend here. It is for you to look up and to endeavor to do your best. Your very best will be none too good.

You try the Old Oaken Bucket, and forget it. You try a lot of things, including the story of your life; but nothing seems to go beyond the success of estimation. Only when by chance you strike some note of genuine auld lang syne, only when you touch the old days of effort and beginning, the frontier days of struggle and achievement, does the applause come spontaneously from these who, with their fathers, built this town and built this country.

So you flounder through and are awarded a polite applause. Judge R. D. Evans is

(Continued on Page 55)

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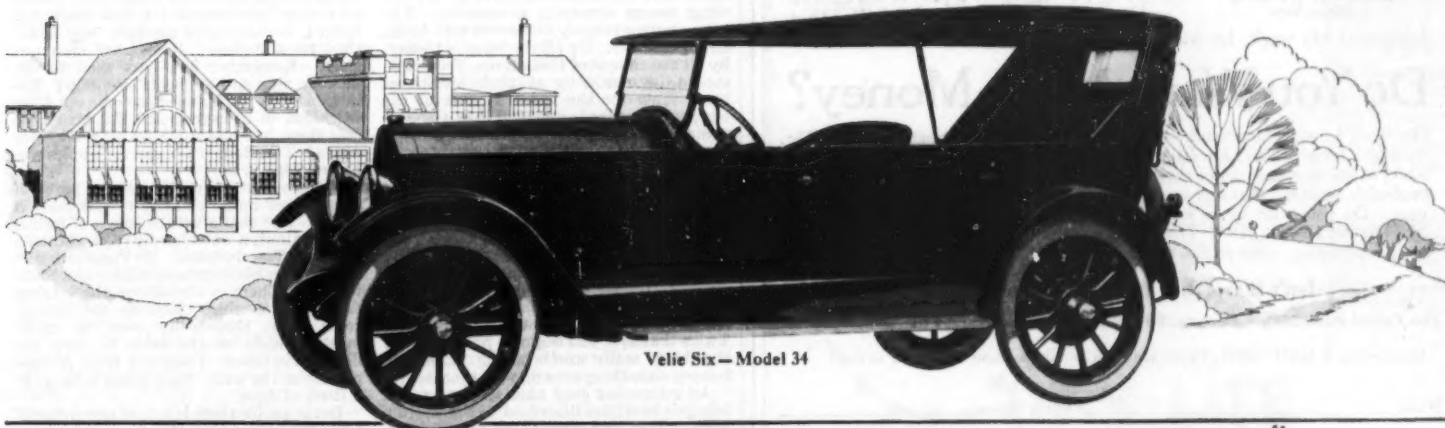
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(Continued from Page 86)

invited offhand to fill a gap which had not been contemplated, but which now seems to exist for some reason. And Judge Evans makes the real speech of the day. He talks to his fellow townsmen about the day of beginnings, and about the growth in real Americanism of a real American town. He speaks offhand, easily, without effort, but they get him and he gets them. So the band plays again and they all go home, not ill-satisfied, after all. You hear two or three people say that they thought Judge Evans made a fine speech—he always does.

The committee of the Rotary Club station you near the passage door. Many of the audience come to shake your hand and thank you. There are young ladies who look astonishingly like young ladies anywhere else—paint, skirts and all—and these waste small time on you. Young business men say "Well, have to get back to the shop—glad to see you." But those who linger with you are old men, many of them gray and wrinkled. You don't know them now, so they give you their names—names once familiar to you on your father's mercantile books—Blackman, Evans, Jones—all the rest. They take you by the hand and say "Hal, I'm glad to see you back home again. I knew your father and your mother before you were born. I bought the first fencing for my farm from your father long before bobbied wire was come."

And the old ladies who wear glasses also call you Hal, and say "I knew your mother. She was a hard-working woman those times. She hardly had time to go to church. Like enough you forget me."

Yes, you have forgotten a great many people and a great many things. Meantime these people who stayed in Prairie City have built up this town. It is one of thousands like it which make the real and essential structure of our nation. It was these people who hung the great flag yonder in the new courthouse. They have changed the public square and rebuilt the town and put it on the map—the map with which you are not familiar, the map of your own country.

And as for you, what have you done meantime? Can you think of anything much better to say about yourself than your claim that you were born of this old frontier stock? That is why they shake your hand now. They are paying no tribute to your personal career, be sure of that. Mostly they are paying tribute to your parents and their God-fearing lives, spent here in another day different from this. All wild prairie then.

Old Memories Recalled

G. Harry Byllesby, president of the Rotary Club, approaches you after a while.

"Well," he says, "this about concludes the exercises of the day, and I suppose you'll want to rest. We'll pick you up at 8:15 and put you on Number 5 east. Mighty fine of you to come out, and we've appreciated your visit. Hope you like the old town as much as it does you. You'll excuse us now, won't you? I've got a board meeting at the bank, and the realty company convenes just after that."

So now you, Harold D. Hawkshaw, are alone at last in a strange metropolis, with which you lack attunement. You wander again over the unfamiliar streets. Everything seems strangely prosperous. The town seems strangely contented with itself, strangely busy. By all the rules of to-day, by all the canons of these times, these men should be mutinous at their straitened lives, eager for the wider horizon of the city, covetous for luxury and ease, the conveniences of life. But they seem buried in crass ignorance and absurd contentment. Of course they do not know what life ought to be—or do they?

You pass stranger after stranger, look into window after window, and realize that you, lecturer on efficiency and success, are the loneliest man in all the world. You have lost something, somewhere. What was it? If you were thirty and starting out, ignorant of everything worth having, matters might be different to-day with you. Twice that age, you begin to ponder about the things really worth having. Someone has put something over on you, that is sure.

An intensified gray man stops you and tells you he is Silas Blansford, of Blansford's Mill—where you used to go bass fishing. He doesn't want to tell you that he knew you when. He wants to tell you that he knew your father and mother when—when

America was America; when there was a West; when a man could start in life with a capital of one hundred and fifty dollars borrowed money and make good. To Silas Blansford you are no more than a little rabbit-hunting, bass-fishing boy. While you were pursuing the larger game, the larger fantasy of the city, this old man just lived along out here, paid his debts, kept up his end of the log. He tells you he always tried to keep up his end of the log.

Suddenly there comes to you a quick comprehension of affairs which you had to come back home to gain. You realize now that in the city a man spends his life, a woman spends her life, in the attempt to evade the log, in the attempt to believe that there is no log to be carried. But now you know that there is; you know that there has been all along. And you perceive that the precise difference between your city and Prairie City is this: In the latter place they know there is a log, and that it is one's duty to get under it and make good by carrying one's own share—personal, township, state and national share of the log. Look at the courthouse flag! Look at this town! Whereas, as to you yourself—

"Tell me," you demand suddenly of Silas Blansford, who knew this town when the hazel brush and grass grew where you now are standing, "is Mrs. Jones still living? Maw Jones, we used to call her even then. She was a neighbor of ours, up in the north end of town, you know."

Echoes From the Past

"Yes," says graybeard Silas Blansford, "Maw Jones is still alive. She's past seventy-five by now, but chipper as ever. Your neighbor, did you say? Maw Jones couldn't be anything but a neighbor any time in her life. It was her cared for your mother, time of her last sickness. I believe the paper said you and your wife was away somewhere then—Europe maybe. She and your paw was strong in the prayer meetings, though neither of them talked religion—just only lived it."

"Sure, you'll find Maw Jones up on Walnut Street near Seventh Avenue. I don't suppose she has a telephone since her husband died, but she'd be mighty glad to see you if you'd go on up."

So late that afternoon you do go on up, and you find Maw Jones at home. She has nearly always been at home. Once she was in Chicago, and she has been to the theater several times and to a good many lectures; and she is a member of the Chautauqua circle and the Presbyterian Church. But spread all those things out over seventy-five years, and a woman still can live at home most of the time.

There are maple trees in front of Maw Jones' house, and a garden at the rear. It is not a large house, only six or seven rooms. Stove heat and kerosene lamps and no ice box. Maw puts things down the well to keep them cool. Such a place in the city could hardly be rented at all.

You know how the house would look inside—a Brussels carpet in the parlor, white along the seams; but the settin' room will have a rag carpet. Remember how you all used to sew rags—the whole family, evenings—to make rag carpets, when you were a boy? Hurt your pride, a boy, to have to sew rags. Rolled them all in a big ball when you got them sewed, and Susie always had a ball bigger than yours, no matter how you tried or how much you fudged, because girls natchally sew faster than boys anyhow. Remember all about that? Remember how you used to eat hickory nuts and apples of evenings? Remember how apples used to come out from Michigan in a wagon, and the man that sold them had one stuck up on a stick for a sign? Two dollars a barrel for apples was a pretty big price.

When you stand on the narrow porch of Maw Jones' house you know what there is inside. The chairs will be made of native black walnut, a wood hardly to be obtained to-day. The bedstead is Victorian and strictly horrible, but clean of linen and counterpane. There is oilcloth on the kitchen table, and a white cloth on the dining-room table, thrown up over the caster in the middle of the table to keep the flies off the silver. There is a Rock of Ages picture on the wall. Maw Jones believes in a Rock of Ages.

In the parlor there is a steel engraving of Landseer's Stag at Bay. It used to hang over the piano, which, like enough, Maw doesn't use much, now that the girls are married and gone. Maw saved her money

for five years to buy that big engraving at Wilson's bookstore and give it to Paw Jones for a Christmas present. He used to be such a deer hunter when Prairie City was frontier. They both were proud of the picture. I reckon maw's dusted off that picture five thousand times—yes, as many as that—since paw went away and left her a widow, to live somehow, as widows seem to do in Prairie City.

Yes, surely you know how it is all going to look inside before maw opens the door; and when she does she also is just the same—gray and bespectacled, wearing an apron around her slightly heavy amidship section. But Maw Jones never will really be old.

Her face lights up when she sees you standing there.

"Why, laws sakes, Hal, how do you do?" she says, offering a hand which feels rough in your own soft fingers. "I was wondering if you would go away and me not see you again. Come on in and set down."

She gives you her best chair, the big patent rocker with side springs, where you have to be careful of your fingers, and seats herself opposite.

"I heard you talk, Hal," she goes on, "down at the high school. I just got back."

You ask her how she liked it. She is not too profuse in praise.

"Well, you did pretty well—pretty well, considerin'. Of course I didn't always know what you were getting at. But then I says to myself, 'How could you expect Hal to know very much about us now, him being away so long—fact is, all his life?'"

"Why, Hal, I recollect the first speech you ever made—first graduatin' exercises in the old schoolhouse, the one with cream-colored brick. And you was that thin them days, and your hair was lots of it, right thick. Your maw always used to tell me she couldn't hardly run a fine-tooth comb through your hair, it was that thick. It wouldn't be so hard now, would it?"

"Of course, about Judge Evans, he always makes a good speech, because he lives here and understands us. Still, I thought they listened right polite to you, too—didn't you, Hal?"

"So you've lived in the city all this time. Let's see—how old are you now? Must be sixty-past. I don't believe you've been back home half a dozen times sense 1876, Centennial year. I guess you're surprised to see how the old town has come on. My sakes! I'm glad I've got the pavement tax paid at least. It was hard on us poor folks. I live here mostly alone, but I get on somehow. I make my own garden and have my dog and two cats and three c'nary birds. I did have a parrot, but she was an awful lot of trouble. It don't cost so much to live here. I don't see how you stand it in the city. I don't see where all the money comes from in the city. But then maybe they spend about all they get, so it seems like more."

Tired of City Folks

"I don't get downtown as much as I did, so I set here and read a good deal when I can find anything to read. Of course there's my Bible and the album on the parlor table; but out here in the settin' room I keep my magazines—some twenty-five-centers, some twenty-centers and some fifteen-centers. Everything is higher now. Not that I can see magazines is any better than what they used to be."

"Tell me, Hal—you're a city man and maybe can tell me why—what makes all the city magazines so much alike? Besides, they're all about the city. You'd think there wasn't any people in the world but city people if you'd read these magazines and believe them. It's all about a beautiful artist model and an artist, or about a rich young man that falls in love with a woman that has a husband. The pictures is mostly low-cut. I don't suppose those artists can draw anything but sofas and divans and swallowtail coats. I'm glad my girls all is married. Of course, such things don't hurt me, layin' around, and I sort of take them to keep up with the times. Not that I think so much of the times."

"Main thing to my mind is, what makes people think the sun rises and sets in the city, so there ain't any other part of the world worth writing or reading about or worth living in? If I was printing a magazine I'd put in less about the city these times and more about folks. Of course that ain't my line of business. Only I get tired of reading about office boys that have

become railroad presidents. What if they did? It wasn't my fault. In the city you folks seem to be crazy over success—you talked about it. What is it when you get it?"

"Now you told how you got on since you started here 'mid these humble surroundings. Did Judge Evans say anything about humble surroundings? You talked from up on the stage, but he talked from right down on the floor. That's what I mean about them magazines—they're up on the stage and not on the floor. Of course I don't know as I'm entitled to say what is success; but I was in Chicago once, and I don't call it no manner of success, Hal, to live in a flat and buy your dinner by telephone, one meal to a time, with no children allowed and no grass to put a foot on. Why, Hal, if you wanted to go fishing, where'd you get a can of worms?"

"And suppose you follow out all the rules for success and make a million dollars and marry four or five beautiful actresses, rapid, and they all leave you, what have you got, after all, when you get old? I can't always figure out what city folks are drivin' at when all they read is about millionaires and beautiful artist models. Same way with the movies—all about millionaires and models. You couldn't hardly sell a picture or magazine that was all country, could you?"

"It's all about the city, and that's all the country gets. And when the country wants to move to the city, the city says that the country had ought to stay out on the farm and produce more. And why? I suppose so the city can sell the country more stories and pictures about millionaires and artist models, low-cut in the pictures. For me, I won't need quite so much of it, or quite so low-cut."

Old-Fashioned Neighbors

"We get along all right, far's I can see, with people that talk right down on the floor, Hal. And as for happiness—don't tell me! How old was you, Hal, when you begun to lose your hair? Your paw kept his right up till he died, and your maw never got gray at all."

"Get it out of your mind we are crazy to have the city pity us or tell us how to live. It's them that needs the pity and don't know it. That's the worst of it—they don't know it. And at the end, what they got? If a artist's model quits you when you're broke, and can't peel a potato without wastin' it no time in her life, what good is she to you? And if you've got a million dollars and no hair or teeth, how's a round steak fried in butter goin' to interest you, supposin' you're able to buy a round steak in the city when you're old? I'll take mine in old Prairie City and live as I go along. I don't owe nobody nothing, and I got no rent to pay, can't no landlord bother me. I don't paper or calcimine every year, no; but then and again, it don't get so dirty every year. Not to mention quiet!"

"Speaking of quiet—you been out to the cemetery, Hal?" Maw Jones' voice suddenly has become more gentle.

You look at your watch. There will be no time now to do anything but catch your train.

"Well, well, it don't make any real difference, I suppose," the old lady comforts you. "I take care of your people's lots every year my own self. They're right adjoinin' mine, and when I go out to put some flowers out for paw it isn't no more trouble to set out a few around your folks' lots while I'm there and handy. So you needn't worry—it'll always be done. If it ain't me it'll be another. You see, we're neighbors like, and we remember back when this town was little and we were all beginnin' together."

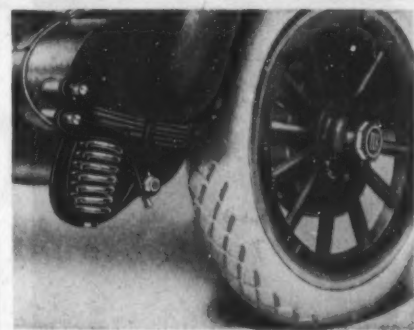
You say something hasty and emotional. "Oh, no, you won't, you couldn't!" says maw, shaking her head. "It's too late. You couldn't live out here now. It ain't so much your not understandin' us—it's only we might not bother to understand you."

Maw Jones chuckles a little bit as she goes on:

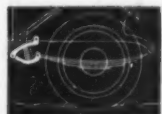
"Yes, I suppose you was paid your railroad fare out here to come and teach us something. We won't worry over that. Main thing to me is, you look so worried, so white and fat like. And you come of such good people too. I can't help hopin' you've learned somethin' from us out home. Have you, maybe?"

Well, Mr. Hawkshaw, have you? When you go back to the city, are you going to

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make some bright remarks, in print or elsewhere, about the old town and the rural things that happen there? Are you going to pride yourself on how you have made good in the city? What is success, anyhow, and who has succeeded—you and your wife, or the widow, Maw Jones? Did you make good, or was it Paw Jones? These two old people who lie yonder in the hazel-brush cemetery, guarded by other hearts and other tongues, the two of whose bone and flesh and heart you are, did they make good in Prairie City, or is it you who have done so in your city since you left the old town years and years ago, with the education they slaved to give you?

When you start East on Number 5 that evening G. Harry Byllesby at the train says he will see you in the city before long, because the city Rotary Club has asked him to speak at a midday luncheon in the club parlors. He hopes you have had a fine visit back home. He smiles at that last.

You yourself do not smile. You do not sleep very much in your berth on the train that night. But you get breakfast on the diner before Number 5 rolls into the city, and you arrive all ready for a full day's work. You telephone your wife that you will be home a little later for dinner. Yes, you think your talk went pretty well out there.

And when you get home—six rooms, fifth floor, sun parlor and privilege of trunk storage in the basement—your wife tells you all the news. The rent is going to be two hundred and sixty dollars a month now. Your pet dog will have to go, civilization now barring dogs as well as children. Your friend Ducey Patterson, who was divorced last year, was married suddenly yesterday—an artist's model this time. They have a dandy studio flat with kitchenette, and only two hundred a month.

But Maisie, your wife, runs down after a while, and you observe her eyes to be damp.

"It maybe wasn't so bad about our having no children, Hal," she says, "for that's as God wills it, and no woman ought to complain forever. But any woman has to have something to love. Do you know, having that little dog was like having a neighbor almost. And if you haven't got any neighbors, Hal—"

Maisie was a country girl once. Came from Minneapolis. Talks nonsense about neighbors. Suddenly you confront your wife.

"Don't you know how hard I work to keep you fixed up in a fine home like this?" you say. "Do you forget your new electric car?"

"The garage raised the rent ten dollars this month," Maisie interrupts.

"Well, suppose it has—that's part of the changing industrial conditions. You don't seem to realize how successful we've been. Didn't they ask me even to go out there and lecture, back home?"

"Back home!" says Maisie sort of low.

Of course you can't talk to a woman who doesn't appreciate you and your success. You take up a magazine and try to read, seeing mostly pictures of bewitching female persons cut low, as Maw Jones would say. But you can't read. All the old ballyhoo seems faint and feeble now.

"Well, g'night, darling." You kiss Maisie and go to your own room. It is ten by ten, dark, but with a lovely Oriental rug on the floor and a real Innes on the wall. You hang up your coat and hat on a hook at the back of the door. You grasp the handle of the closet door and exert a gentle force. It is an in-a-door bed. Takes very little room—you wouldn't know it was there.

You pull down the in-a-door bed and find your pink striped silk pajamas under the pillows. You throw yourself on the padded mattress which covers the box springs. Long, long ago you ceased to kneel beside your bed, as your paw did till he got so he couldn't kneel any more. You have spread yourself out in an attitude of relaxation, and covet sleep so that you may forget things, forget that feeling that someone has put something over on you, somewhere in the game.

You hardly hear the street car grinding around the curve on one side of your building, hardly hear the motor cars roaring as they start from the garage under your window on the other side. This is your home!

You have succeeded in life, have you not? You thank God you are back home and can get a good night's rest.

Out in the reception room, which is easily ten feet by twelve in size, Maisie, left alone, is playing something on the ornamental phonograph. It is an air which sounds familiar.

But I shall not name to you or any city person the air which Maisie is playing on the phonograph. It would not do you any good to know, because you hardly can buy that record anywhere to-day, it is so old-fashioned, so completely out of date.

You fall asleep, planning the details of the next day's campaign. You are not awakened by the cars. You are back home. You have succeeded here—or are you? And have you?

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This can be attributed to just one thing—*the character of the car.*

Could anything but *the character of the car* have appealed so strongly to the more substantial types of citizens—who largely compose the LINCOLN clientele, and whose choice of motor car is determined by its *character*, rather than by monetary consideration?

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Could anything but *the character of the car* have actuated them—as in many cases—

to add the *second* LINCOLN, some the *third*, several the *fourth*, and in one family the *fifth*?

That *character of the car* which wields such persuasive influence finds expression in the unmatched ease and smoothness with which the LINCOLN rides, and drives; in the way it coasts, and climbs, and guides, and glides; and in the way it moves, and acts, and feels.

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All the world eats meat



FUMBAR, GERMAN WEST AFRICA. Slaughtering here is rather ceremonious but unsanitary. The gentleman in the robes of office is a native slaughterer. Others in the picture comprise helpers, customers, and those who hang around the local market in Africa as in less remote places.



JERUSALEM. The equivalent of a "car load order" in the Holy Land.



CONSTANTINOPLE, TURKEY. A youthful meat trader on the way to his father's stall in the Constantinople market. Sanitation as a factor in distribution is an unconsidered subject.



REVAL, ESTHONIA. The temperature of this Baltic state is favorable to unrefrigerated handling in the out-of-doors. The Baltic temperament is accustomed to markets such as this, never having had the improvements that we take so much for granted.

But it is prepared under widely different conditions.

Contrast the modern, clean, orderly Swift & Company packing plant with the unkempt ceremonial butcher of West Africa, killing clumsily in the open.

Compare the Swift refrigerator cars and branch houses carrying meat, refrigerated and carefully protected, from packing plant to dealer, with the boy in Jerusalem delivering on his shoulder meat that is unprotected from insects, dust and heat.

Swift & Company delivers meat products to towns and cities not served by branch houses through a system of car routes. Compare this with the Constantinople pack animal, sweaty and fly-bitten, conveying the unprotected meats on its back.

Look at your own retail dealer's modern service and equipment and compare that with the crude, outdoor markets of Esthonia.

Consider the meager meat allowances some of these foreign people enjoy, and the $2\frac{3}{4}$ pounds per week of the average American.

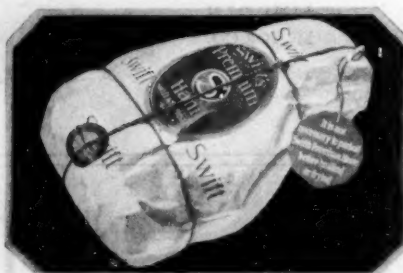
Think also of the sort of meat the pictures suggest; compare the quality with that found in such delicate, delicious products as Swift's Premium Ham and Bacon and Swift's Fresh U. S. Inspected Meats.

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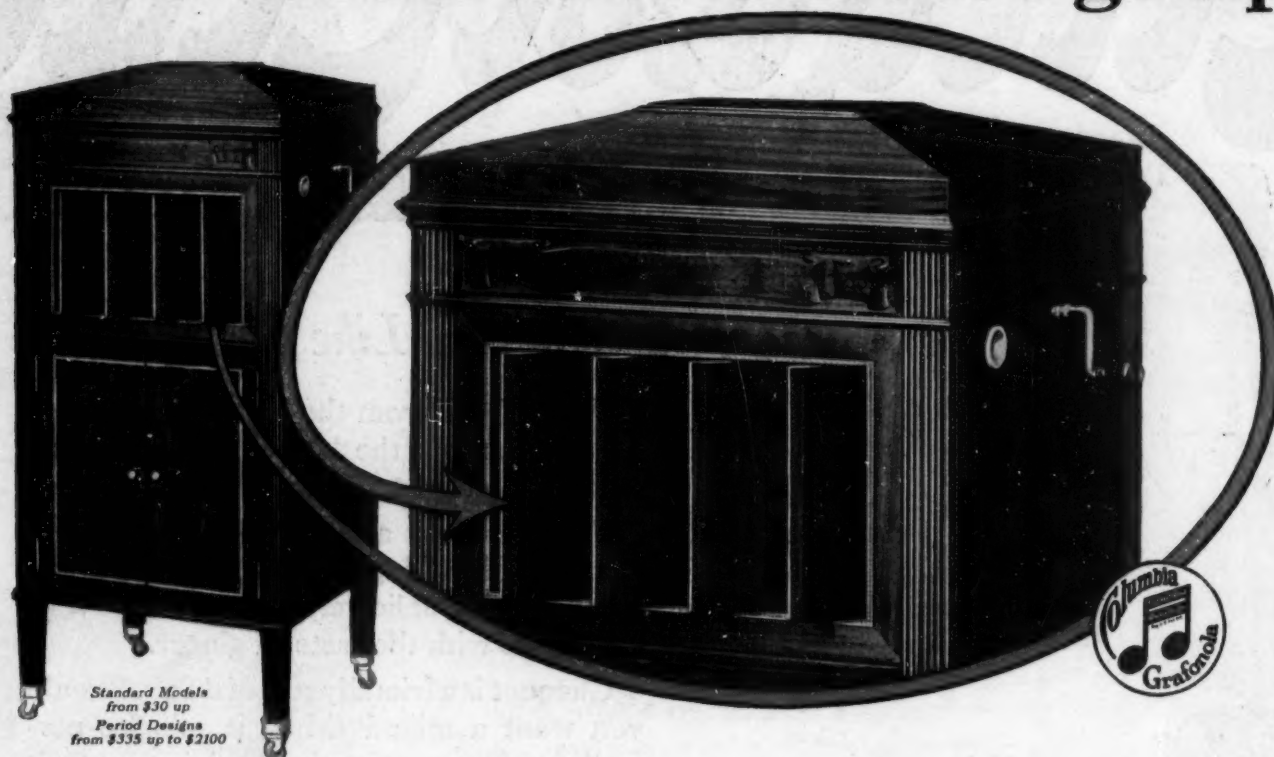
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Do you want an *Automatic Non Set Stop* that lets you enjoy every record to the last exquisite note?

Do you want Tone Leaves that can be instantly adjusted to give you any desired volume of sound?

Do you want the rich, pure, unmuffled music that only the Straight Tone Arm can give?

Do you want a handsome Streamline Cabinet of really artistic design?

Do you want all this at a lower price than you would pay for an older design of phonograph without any of these modern refinements?

With the Tone Leaves tightly closed, the music is soft and the tone has the quality of distance.



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